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LADY DE ROTHSCHILD
AND HER DAUGHTERS

1821-1931



LADY DE ROTHSCHILD WITH HER DAUGHTER CONSTANCE, 1844
From a picture by Mrs. Robertson. By kind permission of Mr. Victor Rothschild

LADY DE ROTHSCHILD
AND HER DAUGHTERS
1821-1931

By LUCY COHEN

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.



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“ And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.”

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PREFACE

“ TIME’s winged chariot ” rushes past at an even greater pace than it did. Great wars, industrial changes, revolutions throughout the world—but not in our much-blessed island—chase away the remembrance of events almost from one day to another. The life of man may be prolonged, but the life of books is shortened. There are too many with which to keep pace ; a book may be the talk of a few months, of a year even, but soon the reviewers hasten to recommend other books in even more insistent terms and the last year’s favourites are relegated to the dusty shelves of forgotten literature.

Yet, to most people, there is a strange fascination in the past ; and we get one book following another about the same periods and the same people. So it is that I venture to produce this volume, which may revive the past and make, for a moment, some of the events and people of the nineteenth century live again. Much of the same matter can be found in Lady Battersea’s own *Reminiscences*, published twelve years ago. She left me her papers, thinking that some of them were worth publishing, and in the form of extracts from letters and journals we catch, with all their freshness, the impressions on the minds of the writers as they occur, day by day and week by week.

The chronicle stretches from 1836 down to 1931. By it light is thrown from a fresh angle on Disraeli and his erratic wife, as well as on Thackeray, all three friends of the family. There are glimpses of Louis Napoleon and the disturbances of 1848 and of 1870, of the Austrian Court in 1873, and of three generations of our own royal family. In their letters and conversations we find characteristic traits of Mr. Gladstone, Lord Rosebery, and their Liberal supporters, and of Burne-Jones and Meredith, and other artists and writers.

Sometimes the papers tell of great events, or of great personages ; at others they are but the record of childish doings, or the more intimate experiences in the lives of three people—Lady de Rothschild and her two daughters, Lady Battersea and the Hon. Mrs. Eliot Yorke—and, to some degree, of their many Rothschild relatives.

The journals and letters devote a great deal of space to accounts of illnesses and deaths in the family. According to the early journals, mourning and lamentation were looked on as a pious rite, and references are constantly being made to the week of mourning and of prayer prescribed by orthodox Jewish tradition for the survivors of the family of the departed. The anniversaries of these events are observed in both Lady de Rothschild's and Lady Battersea's journals, and Lady Battersea herself seemed to have an almost morbid interest in "gazing on the face of the dead." I have, indeed, left out many of her own and her mother's reflections on the transitoriness of life and the vicissitudes of fortune.

Almost any annals stretching over ninety years of family life would offer points of interest, but the

Rothschild family in its earlier days appeals to the imagination by its financial power, which brought it into contact with those who ruled the destinies of Europe and by its munificence ; while its Judaism and the peculiar features of its solidarity make the family history interesting and, in some ways, unique. But, even apart from their family, the three women round whom the story centres would always have been of mark, on account both of their qualities and of their ideals.

Lady Battersea, in her will, requested her cousin, Mr. Leonard Montefiore, to co-operate with me. I wish to offer him my thanks for his help in the onerous task of the initial work of the destruction and selection of her papers. His father, Mr. Claude Montefiore, has encouraged me by most kindly revising the book.

I am indebted to my brother-in-law, Sir Thomas Colyer Ferguson, for the genealogy and the index, to Sir Charles Strachey and Mr. Noel Behrens for very helpful suggestions and criticisms, and to my secretary, Miss Olivia Jennings, not only for the typing but for her discriminating aid in the arrangement of the extracts.

I should also like to thank all those who have been kind enough to permit the insertion of the letters and illustrations in the book.

Finally, I hope Sir John Murray will accept my expression of gratitude for his patience, encouragement and advice.

L. C.

London,

January, 1935.

CHAPTER I

1836-1841

Introductory—Rothschilds and Montefiores—Early journals

—Anthony and Louisa—Letters from relations

Now, when a somewhat melodramatic film concerning the house of Rothschild has been presented in so many of the cinemas of America and Europe, it may be interesting to hear something of the intimate life of the family.

The late Lady Battersea, the great-grandchild of old Amschel Rothschild and of his wife Gudule, entrusted me with the disposal of her papers and correspondence. Those who care to do so may read about her in her *Reminiscences*, which are written with her own charm and vivacity and which had an immediate success on their publication in 1922, the first edition being sold out within a fortnight. Some may desire to look more closely into the life of her childhood and girlhood and to hear something further of her forbears and contemporaries. I have, therefore, tried to put some form into my shapeless mass of material.

This consists of the almost daily letters between Constance (Lady Battersea), her mother (Lady de Rothschild) and her younger sister, Annie (the Hon. Mrs. Eliot Yorke); also of a voluminous correspondence with her large family circle and friends, many of whom were well-known people. There are also many journals written by her

mother and herself, and one by her sister, when a child of twelve.

Although Lady Battersea wrote to her sister in 1924 :

"I am making a holocaust of my correspondence. I have found some queer old things amongst them, very precious best in the flames like the Gods in the Valkyrie," a huge residue remained. And even the greater part of this was only fit for the same fate, or was unsuitable for publication.

A genealogical tree of the Rothschild and Montefiore families is given in the Appendix, but a few words about the members of it who figure most prominently in this chapter may help to make it clearer.

A short account of the family is given by Lady Battersea in her book. Here she tells of its founder, Amschel Mayer, and of how he settled his five sons in five of the great countries of Europe¹—England, France, Germany, Italy, Austria—in order that a banking business should be established to obviate the danger of transferring large sums of money across Europe during the troubled times of the Napoleonic Wars. Here, too, we can read how these sons ultimately had palaces in each of these five countries, while their old widowed mother refused to move from her house in the Frankfort Ghetto, saying that what was good enough for their father was good enough for her.

It is necessary to realize the close family intimacy which existed between the five brothers. It continued down to the next generations and was intensified by the Rothschild habit of inter-marriage, so that we get English, French, German, Italian, Austrian Nathaniels, Anselms, Charleses,

¹ The five arrows shown in the Rothschild coat-of-arms.



NATHAN MAYER ROTHSCHILD

From a water-colour. By kind permission of Mr. Ernest Cohen

Lionels and Louisas, until it is difficult not to confuse one with another.

Thus the various offspring weave in and out of one another ; visits and letters are being constantly exchanged, and in all the trips abroad hospitality is given by the various cousins in the different cities. Any piece of family news of birth, marriage or death is at once communicated to the scattered relatives.

In the narrative we shall observe the gradual loosening of this exclusiveness. Almost inevitably many of the daughters marry into the Christian families with whom they come in contact, their children adopting the prevailing religion. The men, however, choose their wives from Jewish families, although they no longer restrict themselves to their cousins, and they still stand in many respects as leaders of Jewish philanthropy, and are looked upon as some of the foremost Jewish representatives in political and public affairs.

But throughout, in spite of the close family ties, it will be seen that each branch of the Rothschild family identified itself absolutely with the national fortunes of the country to which it belonged. It is, perhaps, one of the unfortunate results of the Zionist movement that this feature, which was so marked in the Jewish life of the nineteenth century, is now confused by the idea of a national, rather than a spiritual, home in Palestine.

Nathan Mayer Rothschild, the founder of the English branch, married Hannah Cohen,¹ whose

¹Levy Barent Cohen, Hannah's father, is referred to in 1778 as a merchant in a large way of business in Bevis Marks. The family came from Ammersfort in Holland, where one of their houses is now the town hall. In the other they had sheltered the Prince of Orange from his enemies.

sister married Sir Moses Montefiore, the well-known philanthropist ; while his younger brother, Abraham, married Miss Henrietta de Rothschild.

Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Montefiore had four children, Joseph, Charlotte, Nathaniel and Louisa. Louisa married Sir Anthony de Rothschild ; it is to her, Lousia¹, that most of the early letters are addressed, and these and her journals, which she began to keep in 1837 at the age of sixteen, give us a quiet picture of the family's daily life.

Her father, Abraham Montefiore, died when Louisa was a child, and she spent several years of her early girlhood with her mother and sister in Italy. On their return to England the family occupied a pleasant, roomy house at Worth Park, in Sussex, and another in Stanhope Street, in London.

Her mother, Henrietta, was a lively woman, as we can see from some of the letters which have come down to us, and enjoyed her social activities, which are described with much zest.

Her granddaughter, Constance, at fifteen, writes of her in 1858 :

" . . . We soon recommenced our lessons after chatting for a little while with Grandmamma, which was about the same as always. At tea we talked about high heels and fancy dresses and plays and pantomimes and charades . . . "

Both Louisa's brothers, Joseph and Nathaniel Montefiore, seem to have had a great sense of

¹ Lady de Rothschild's great grandfather was Moses Vita Montefiore of Philpot Lane in the City of London. Merchant from Leghorn. There exists in the synagogue of Leghorn a curtain, embroidered with emblems denoting the Montefiores, and with the date 1661.

humour, and their letters form a vivid contrast to the writings of their "Beloved Lou." Lady Battersea writes in her journal in 1910 when, after her mother's death, she is looking through Lady de Rothschild's letters :

" . . . Uncle Natty was always dry, caustic and amusing. He wrote remarkably well, with no attempt at fine writing. Evidently he loved his medical work and his scientific training and he must have spent a jolly time in Paris. He had a soft heart and was always falling in love with someone, but was finally comfortably anchored and proved himself to be the best, kindest of husbands to his wife and a devoted, delightful father. I was very fond of him. . . .

" Then comes Joe. He must have been an interesting young man, full of life and spirits, very clever and amusing. His letters are capital, very original and affectionate. What an unfortunate man in his matrimonial adventures. He tried to marry Aunt Juliana, who literally threw him over for Uncle Mayer, Julia, who preferred a grand match, and Louisa, to whom he behaved abominably. Then came Henrietta Sichel [whom he married] . . ."

Lady de Rothschild and her sister Charlotte were in absolute sympathy in their intellectual and social pursuits. Charlotte was obliged to lead rather a retired life, owing to her ill health, but her niece always spoke with admiration of her original and spiritual mind. She married Mr. Horatio Montefiore in 1847, and died in 1854, a terrible loss to her sister, who writes at that time :

" Charlotte, my own darling sister, is no more. . . . Hers was the strong master mind which originated, while mine only followed."

Lady de Rothschild's portrait is painted in her journal, written in her careful Italian handwriting. I only knew her in her later days when age may

have brought the philosophic mind. She then gave the impression of a great lady, with the gentlest, most perfect manners. The late Lord Rosebery wrote of her in her favourite little blue drawing-room at Aston Clinton, her country house: "It seemed to me a sort of shrine and a centre from which radiated goodness and sympathy."

Lady de Rothschild was always said to have been extremely pretty as a girl, small and dainty, with auburn waving hair and a delicate complexion. Even in her old age she was charming to look upon, when her hair was white under her widow's cap, and her cheeks were still pink and her eyes still retained their blue serenity.

In my limited space we inevitably lose something of the intimate charm and delicate atmosphere that surround her when we read, day by day, of her striving after perfection, of her joy in nature and in art, and of her devotion to her own family and, above all, to her children and their education. How different are the aspirations in the first pages to those of present-day girls of sixteen:

"JULY 29th 1837: I have now been sixteen years in the world. It may be that half my career is already passed, perhaps less, perhaps, also, more. At all events, from the rapidity with which these, my youthful years, have passed, I may be sure that however far the term of my life may seem to me at present, it must ultimately arrive, and with all the fear and horror it so often inspires, unless I have by that time acquired all that is required for my eternal welfare. It is alone the exercise of religion during my life which can soothe my dying hours, and with the pardon of the Almighty procure for me, when disengaged of this mortal coil, lasting and unalloyed felicity. I ought, therefore, to strive to obtain a religious

spirit which may influence the whole tenor of my conduct.

"This year, which completely closes the era of my childhood, is one most adapted for forming fixed principles, a pious spirit, and all, in fact, which I shall require during the remainder of my life. It is on this account that I now take the resolution of consecrating the following year particularly to the service of the Almighty, studying as well as lies in my power the doctrines of our own religion, our holy Bible, and my own foibles and faults. . . ."

Here we trace the spirit which inspired Queen Victoria at the same age (they were born within a year of each other) to declare: "I will be good."

The following year finds her still striving, and still dissatisfied with her progress:

"JUNE 2nd 1838: . . . I have had moments of high religious feeling: have tried to acquire real piety, and prayed sincerely to my God to help my endeavours, but this good disposition seemed to be but an enthusiasm kindled by some passing event and extinguished before it produced any good effects. But generally I have been cold and indifferent, entirely engrossed by worldly concerns.

"Little or no improvement, then, has taken place since last year. Let me now try and discover whence this proceeds.

"1. A great want of energy is, I think, one of the causes. I do not give myself any trouble to think of serious books, occupations, or to keep myself always employed with some religious work or reading. This is very necessary for me and would be a great means of preventing relapses.

"2. Strict self examination has been somewhat neglected.

"3. A great weakness, which makes me easily carried away by the impulse of the moment, allows my imagination to wander to all sorts of useless things, and that prevents me from fixing my attention on profitable

subjects. When once launched into company and *pleasure*, though not greatly amused, I am too weak not to be engrossed by them and it is with the greatest difficulty I return to serious pursuits."

She concludes by saying :

" If in this year, living in a retired manner, at least in comparison with what I shall do hereafter, with time, books, friendly warning and advice, I do not lay in a store of piety and fervour, and fall as I have hitherto done at the smallest temptation, I shall certainly not be able to withstand all that I shall have to encounter when once in society. . . ."

Her resolutions for further improvement close with a prayer.

Such heart-searchings are typical of many of the women of this period.

During her engagement to her cousin, Anthony de Rothschild, whom she married in 1840, Louisa carefully plans out what her daily life shall be, and from these pages no one would gather that she lived in the midst of the luxury with which her family was associated.

" MAY 28th 1839: . . . At the age of about one-and-twenty I shall be mistress and have to make the best use of my *intellect*, my *time*, my *affections* and my *fortune*.

" I must by that time have developed my reasoning powers and my judgment . . ."

(She resolves to study religion, history, general geography, ancient literature.)

" . . . I shall continue my drawing with as much activity as possible, not forgetting to let the theory keep pace with the practice. By theory I understand perspective, anatomy, a little geometry, books on painting and lives of painters. I must occupy myself sufficiently with musick, not entirely to forget what I know until I am able to resume it.

"Everything not mentioned here I shall continue in the same way as I have previously done.

TIME.

"I must have learnt during that period, not only to employ my time always usefully, but also in the most useful manner possible.

THE AFFECTIONS.

"I must by that time have learnt to regulate my affections according to the dictates of duty and reason.

"Means of doing this :

"I must never allow myself any preferences or antipathies which are not approved of by my conscience and reason. I must never permit myself to have any affections unfounded on esteem, and must never, either from self interest, caprice or thoughtlessness demonstrate more affection than I really feel."

Besides the journal, the papers contain many letters and other documents which are of interest in the light they throw upon the family in these early days.

The first of the records is from a draft of a will made by Nathan Mayer de Rothschild, the founder of the English branch of the family. Part of it is worth transcribing as it gives a picture of his profound family feeling, by its appeal to his four sons for unity and his exhortation that :

" . . . my beloved wife, Hannah (born Cohen) is always to co-operate with my four beloved sons on all important occasions and to have a voice in all deliberations ; moreover, it is my special wish, that my sons shall not engage in any transactions of moment without having previously asked her maternal advice, and that my children, sons as well as daughters, shall always treat her with sincere affection, true attachment, and the greatest respect ; as she (who during a period of years, has aided me in prosperity and adversity like an affectionate, faithful and loving wife) in so high a degree deserves . . ."

He further

“desires that his House and Business in London shall be continued by his four sons and the Association be forwarded by his beloved brothers. The Partnership to be prolonged and renewed for five years more.”

He recommends his sons to give a ready compliance

“to the experience of his brothers in their endeavour by their diligence, activity and integrity to maintain and increase the splendour and honour of the house, and begs his beloved brothers to aid his beloved children in their Father’s place and preserve for them love, kindness and attachment.”

Typical of the times, regarding his daughters’ portions he says :

“Should they marry without the consent of their Mother and brothers then they shall forfeit the whole entirely, with the Interest thereon.”

The sums bequeathed in this document do not sound particularly large nowadays. The fortune must have lain in the business, in the close connection of the brothers scattered in the five European cities and in the unswerving determination to keep the firm restricted to members of the family. As an example of this, I quote from a letter from Joseph Montefiore (Lady de Rothschild’s brother), to his uncle, Sir Moses Montefiore :

“Godesberg.

“22nd August 1836.

“... I wished to thank you again for the excellent advice you gave me, concerning my future occupation. . . .

“I seize this opportunity to inform you of a conversation that I had with my Aunt¹ and Lionel² a short time before I left.

¹ The widow of Nathan Mayer de Rothschild, mother of Sir Anthony de Rothschild.

² Her eldest son, then head of the English firm.

"It began by my asking my Aunt what she would think of my being a barrister; her opinion was, that my education had not fitted me for it. . . . She then passed in review many other eligible employments, such as, being an agriculturist, a clerk in some government office or a banker; for various reasons I objected to all these, as to the last, I said I should never go into business, if it were not possible to have an interest in their house. Subsequently she consulted Lionel about my being taken as one of the partners in the Firm; he was averse to this, alleging that there were already too many and that it would be a bad precedent, however that I might ask my Uncles at Frankfort, and that he should vote with the majority, observing that if I became a partner I must change my name to that of Rothschild. This condition I most decidedly did not like, although at the time I thought it unnecessary to make any comments upon it.

"I have since reconsidered it and both my Mother and myself approve of it so little that I am resolved not even to speak about it to my Uncles. . . ."

He finishes by indicating that after a year, if he went into the London Counting-house (not as a partner), if Lionel's sister, Hannah Mayer, should be still unmarried, and if he *liked* her, he might propose to her and thus always have the benefit of his cousin's experience and advice: should she refuse, he could seek consolation in his then adopted profession.

But Hannah, a beautiful girl, made a romantic marriage in 1839, after her father's death, with the Hon. Henry FitzRoy, in spite of the family's opposition to marriage outside the Community. It astonishes us to find one of her nieces, then only fourteen years of age, even twenty years later, writing on the death of Mrs. FitzRoy's invalid boy:

"I cannot help thinking that all the misfortune and distress which have overwhelmed poor Aunt Hannah

Mayer have been a punishment for having deserted the faith of her fathers and for having married without her mother's consent . . ."

To return to Lady de Rothschild, I quote from some of the letters exchanged between her and her future husband, while he was in Paris and she with her mother in London ; his spontaneous and affectionate, and hers rather prim. Indeed, as in her journals, she makes constant allusions to her "unfortunate reserve," saying :

" . . . I am quite of your opinion as to mutual confidence being essential to our happiness. I am far too much convinced of this for there being any chance of my acting in a contrary manner, and indeed, if unfortunately I am too reserved in general, at least I shall try and I hope succeed in shaking it off completely towards you."

Anthony's letters are full of the gifts which he is anxious to shower on his little bride.

" Do not forget to send me the measure of your head. I will also send you next Monday a glove, so that you may let me know whether they fit you. But I must not tell you what I have ordered, as I wish to surprise you with them."

" . . . I hope to have settled all before the 15th. Nevertheless, my dearest and best Lou, do not calculate for that very day, as I have ordered a great many things which I fear will not be finished. You have forgotten to send me the measure of your head—be so good as to send it to me as soon as you can. The present fashion is, as I said, completely lace. The handkerchieves are all of lace, and should you have a cold I do not know what you could do without I had a second one in my pocket. The caps and hats are really beautiful, as you will be able to judge by the things that I intend bringing. . . ."

" . . . I have ordered some very nice things for you, dear Lou: a hat, a cap, and ring which I hope you will like. You will therefore see how necessary it was for

me to have had the measure of your head ; also three very beautiful handkerchieves and a few other things. I do not wish you to mention it, as I shall show you them all, but only wish to give them after our marriage. I will tell you the reason when I come to England. I must not forget to tell you that I have ordered a bracelet which I am sure will be very much admired. I cannot give you the description as I wish you to be surprised. I give you these little details, my dearest Louisa, so as to make you in a good humour with me . . .”

She writes in reply :

“ . . . I have to thank you for two little letters, one of which I received last night, the mail having arrived but late. With regard to all due order I must begin by answering the first of these and tell you how much obliged I am for all the pretty things which you are going to bring over. I must beg of you to believe however that mentioning them was not at all necessary in order to *put me in a good humour* which I consider as anything but a flattering remark, as of course it implies my being in a bad one. I have most scrupulously bridled my tongue and not uttered a word about caps, hats, handkerchiefs, or any of the other articles, in order to obey your injunctions, but at the same time I cannot help puzzling my brain in order to find some plausible reason for my silence, but as yet I have not succeeded and I think it will remain a mystery until you are here yourself to explain it. . . .”

“ . . . The gloves you were kind enough to send are a little too large. The fingers are that ——— too long and the hand is almost as much too wide. The fingers are also an idea too wide. Have you received the measure of my head ? I sent it again a few days ago. I have but little space left I perceive and that must be employed in thanking you for the sugar-plum box to come which creates *a great sensation* here.”

“ Paris 15. January 1840.

“ My dearest, best, most amiable and most charming Louisa,

"I did not write to you yesterday, my best Lou, as I went to Chantilly about some horses which I have there, which deprived me of the pleasure of writing to you. You cannot conceive how cross I was in the evening that I had not written to you, for now it is such a *want*, that if I do not write or hear from you my darling Lou, it makes me in such a temper. But what cannot be prevented must be endured. It is very wrong of me, but my temper is so, and I know well that I cannot cure it, except in your presence.

"I can change the gloves as you wish and they will be made as you wish.

"Good-bye dearest, best and most amiable Louisa. If you find that my letter is not as it ought, do not keep it and burn it, for angry words ought never to be mentioned in a letter but sometimes it is stronger than myself. Pray excuse this and do not forget that the only thing that I wish and desire now is to be back and in your society.

"Good bye dearest, best, most charming Lou, and I send you a thousand kisses on your lips which I beg of you to receive from your most affectionate and most attached future husband,

"A. R.

"15. January.

"Remember me most kindly to all your family."

Louisa defends herself in her replies :

"... I was half inclined on reading your libellous epistle, for such it undoubtedly was to both of us, accusing you of ill humour, and me of all sorts of horrors, to submit it to the flames. No sooner however did you propose a fiery death than, according to human nature, I became lenient and commuted its but too merited punishment to imprisonment for life. . . ."

"... How could you imagine I was indifferent about the presents which you are kind enough to take so much trouble about ? and secondly how could you believe that I had not sent it when in two of my letters I had told you just the contrary ? I should not have minded you accusing me of negligence but I was really sorry that

you should have said that I *would not send the measure* after you had so repeatedly asked me for it. I hope my dear Anthony you will not again have so little confidence in me as to think that I shall not immediately do whatever you may ask me. . . .”

She is also a little *piquée* by his delay in leaving Paris. He explains this by the calls of business and his inability to sell his horses.

“ . . . I write to you dearest Louisa every day about my affairs which continue very fair ; as I wrote, the only thing which gives me a little trouble are my stables—they will not buy my horses but for very little, and as they cost me so much money I do not like to sacrifice so much. It really makes me very angry when I think what (I was going to curse) terrible cheats these dealers are. Patience. I must see what can be done. It is the only thing that troubles me a little.

“ I hope that this will find you quite well, enjoying the best of health. Do not forget, dearest, best Louisa, to take now and then a little *walk*. . . .”

He has also to supervise his arrangements for removing to London.

“ . . . I have done one good thing in preparing my friends the Customs House gentlemen at Dover, that I intended returning with three or four carriages, all full of fine things. They have promised to do all they possibly can for me. . . .”

“ . . . They are as you may suppose very anxious for me to come back to Paris but I have told them that it will only be on account of business if I do. So it will all depend a great deal upon the state of James’s¹ health, as also what is going forward in business. You will perceive my dearest Louisa that all the family are complete slaves to business therefore whatever plans we may make or wish for, may be very much changed by circumstances. . . .”

¹ Baron James de Rothschild, head of the French House and uncle of Anthony.

“ Paris, Tuesday [1840]

“ My dearest, best, most amiable and most charming Louisa,

I did not go out shooting this morning, not on account of the cold but as Émeute was expected, and Anselm and myself did not think at such times that we ought to leave the capital of France for fear of any accident—although I do not foresee the least danger, nor do I think that anything will or can take place, for when the Authorities know very well what is to take place, and what with the cold, there is no danger for the French creating a disturbance. But as we are the two responsible people here we remained at home. I cannot therefore let the day pass without writing a few lines to my darling little future wife, and to thank her for her very tender and her very affectionate letter of this morning. I am quite rejoiced to hear that you are quite well in this very cold weather, and that you follow mine and the Dr's orders by taking a little exercise. You would say that I ought to follow the principle that I preach for I have been uncommonly busy this day and it is now nearly two o'clock and I have not been out of the warmest room of my appartement, and do nothing but reading the newspapers and a cigar resting in my mouth. This however will be my destiny till I come back to England, and am again near the fireside in Tilney Street, sitting next to my dearest Lou, God bless her. I need not repeat too often that all what will depend upon myself, will not make my stay at Paris long, but this infernal frost, not as you say, that I like the cold weather, counteracts my intentions not a little, and with all the good will in the world, and with all the praising of the goodness of my horses, I cannot get the buyers to come and see them.

“ I sent you yesterday through Sir F. Trench a box containing a basket of sugar plums which I trust you will find good. I wanted to send you some nice warm gloves, which I have ordered but which were not sent home in time. Never mind dearest best and most charming Lou. I hope and trust that the cold will always remain in the atmosphere and not [attack] any part of your charming person, so that your affection

may always remain at the highest point of the Barometer. I assure you that mine is at the greatest and the only thing that would satisfy it will be when I am once more with my future wife, and with God's blessing, only to be separated when God calls one, which I hope and trust will not be till we are both many hundred years old.

" Good-bye, a thousand kisses on your lips,

" From your most affectionate future husband,
" A. R.

" You will have a letter to answer on Sunday.

" Paris, Tuesday."

Louisa sympathizes with his difficulties with horse-dealers :

" I am very glad that all your affairs are going on prosperously, as for stable concerns I can readily understand that they are the most difficult to arrange, as from time immemorial horse dealers and cheats have been very nearly synonymous. I can but echo back what you say, *patience*, and I suppose with that all will be adjusted according to your wishes. . . .

" I have studiously followed your injunction of taking a walk whenever the cold was not too alarming and the fire (against which you inveigh so much) not too enticing. The latter is such a temptation now, that it really requires great heroism in a chilly being like myself to resist it. . . ."

Like other young couples looking about for a house they write to each other :

" Do not forget to enquire about a house, for whatsoever are our inclinations and wishes, it will be quite requisite for us to have some place taken where we can remain, as I told you my best Lou, undisturbed. Therefore, my dearest Life, do not forget to make a few enquiries and note them all down till I come back. For if we do not take a house for a year, we must for the time that we intend remaining in England. . . ."

" . . . I am glad to know that you know of several houses. Mamma has written to me about a house in Grosvenor Square. You know my best Lou what I told you that we must not be too near *any person*. Our family is

large and it will be requisite for us to live for ourselves. Should we be either too near to Piccadilly¹ or to Stanhope Street,¹ you know my reasons and I am sure that you will appreciate what I have written and told you about that question. . . .”

She looks at various houses and gives an amusing description of one fruitless expedition with his mother :

“ . . . Hardly had I finished my letter yesterday when Aunt called for me to go with her on a *house examining* expedition to Grosvenor Square. It was nearly four o'clock when we started in defiance of the darkness, whose mischievous influence was felt in preventing our being able to distinguish 6s and 9s on the doors and thus producing a few mistakes. At last however we were admitted into the house bearing the proper number and its beauties (though only half disclosed by the light of a tallow candle) were so great that we felt quite repaid for the trouble of finding it out. All the rooms it contained (and there were a great many) were large and handsomely furnished and after having enquired various questions concerning it your Mamma asked what the terms were. A look of the greatest astonishment was the only reply, another stare followed the reiteration of the question and at last the servant said with slight indignation that his master had certainly no idea of letting his house. It was now our turn to be astonished. The mistake arose from an error on Morant's card and the real house was I believe just over the way. . . .”

Evidently neither of them wished to make London their real home.

“ It is quite true ” [he writes] “ what you think of my dislike to London, to English Society and to English people—and to tell you the truth I shall do my utmost to have as little to do with them there as possible. Do not think on this account that I intend coming to live in Paris which will certainly not be the case. I have sent all

¹ Her mother lived in Stanhope Street, and his in Piccadilly.

my furniture, horses and everything to England; but never-the-less after our marriage I hope that you have not changed your mind and that you will travel with me, for I should like very much to pass the winter in Italy and to see that part of the world which I have not seen. . . . ”

In spite of his dislike of England at that time, it is only fair to add that after he settled there he became assimilated into English country life, more perhaps than either of his brothers.

I give Louisa's reply to the above letter :

“ MY DEAR ANTHONY

“ January 21st, 1841.

“ I was very much pleased with your two epistles, though (as I am to be candid) rather angry with you for thinking that I should find one of them too long. You are quite right in saying that living in the country is quite according to my taste, for although I think it is our duty as well as in our power to make ourselves happy in all situations still a country life to me has more charms than any other. It relieves one from the constant petty agitations, jealousies and vexations, trifling indeed, but so numberless as to become very disagreeable, and which are almost necessarily attached to a continual town residence, and it gives us in exchange a happy and contented spirit which makes us pleased with ourselves and consequently with all about us. To make a most abrupt leap from ruralities to London dissipation I must tell you that I am not as you suppose waiting for you to go to the Pantomimes as in that case I should most likely have to acquire a Job-like patience and restrain all my laughing desires till 1841 as I am afraid they will all be over by the time you return. I believe we are going tomorrow to Covent-garden. I say I believe because I have so often been disappointed in my theatrical projects that I do not now count upon it at all as sure. . . .

“ Yours ever affectionately,

“ L. MONTEFIORE.”

The last letter from which I quote is evidently

written in anticipation of Anthony's immediate return from Paris :

"... It seems quite strange to me that I should be commencing a letter which will most likely be my last to Paris. I had no idea certainly when, before your departure, I thought of our correspondence that it would ever appear odd to me to discontinue it, but I am such a cat-like creature, so much influenced by habit that I almost think when you are here I shall still be writing letters to Paris. It is quite impossible for me to stay to look as you say at *the heavens*, for a dense, genuine, yellow, London fog conceals most effectually the brightest sun or the darkest clouds, however the wind seems to be somewhat drowsy after his unwelcome exertions, which augurs well for you. If you leave on Saturday this will just arrive with the rest of your friends to wish you a pleasant journey..."

After her marriage, Lady de Rothschild and her husband spent two years in Paris, and during this time she received letters from her various relations on the different topics of the day. I give two typical letters from her mother.

"MY DEAREST LOUISA,

"15th of May, 1841.

"I always flatter myself that a few lines from me will give you pleasure, and it is my greatest delight to do anything in the shape to please you. Now for a short account how I was amused, in one word never so well. Primo the rooms are magnificent, not hot, room enough to sit down. I went with the Hope Veres, which I found most agreeable—the girls and I arrived in very good time so to enable myself to see the Queen make her entrée. The Company, or better to say the best part of the Company were assembled in a room and stood up like soldiers forming a line on each side, the Queen made at half past ten her appearance with all her Court, bowing most graciously to those who were not known to Her Majesty and addressing a few words to those who had the honor of being known.

"She enters into a red room, the Music commences and a quadrille is danced, the Queen with the Prince of Leiningen, Prince Albert with the Princess of Leiningen, Miss Somerset with Lezbettern, Miss Antrobus with the Swedish Minister's son. The Queen was dressed in white tulle and was in very good spirits. Prince Albert in his hussar uniform looking uncommonly handsome.

"The Ladies were nicely dressed but nothing wonderful. Lady Ailesbury had in my opinion two of the famous petticoats on—such a size. Everybody of my large and extensive acquaintance was very polite and had the appearance as if glad to see me there. The Premier shook hands with me and said a few polite words.

"Excellent supper beautifully arranged and one was quite at home, sans gêne—you have seen the rooms, beside I am not a person to give any description, my memory is a stupid bad one, and I only remember that I never was more pleased with a ball than this. It even surpasses Naples when Prince Charles honoured me in asking me to dance.

"I came home at half past two and had no trouble to get my carriage. Lord William Lennox was with me almost the whole time and got me my carriage. I hope that on Monday, please God, I shall receive a line from you. My love to Anthony how does he like his old friend Paris? I lost my French play last night and I hear Mademoiselle Rachell performed even better if possible than the first. Joseph¹ is better. I had three letters from Nathaniel¹ dated all from Naples. He likes his trip and was much pleased with his reception.

"Adieu my dearest, take care of yourself,

"Yours for ever,

"HENRIETTA MONTEFIORE."

Mrs. Montefiore to Louisa de Rothschild.

"London. 1st June, 1842.

"... What did you say to that horrid, infamous man who wanted to shoot our excellent and most courageous

¹ Her sons.

Queen. I hope he will be hanged, and this as soon as possible. How very pretty of her not to allow any of her ladies to accompany her on Monday in the carriage. Charlotte and myself met her yesterday in the park in a carriage with Prince Albert and the Prince Leiningen. She sat as upright as possible with no appearance of fear, but poor Prince Albert was pale and Charlotte says of a most uncomfortable and anxious countenance and most happy to get home again. The park was crammed full. The Queen, I am delighted to say, was beautifully received and very much cheered. . . ."

Rachel's acting seems to make a great impression on Louisa's correspondents. Her brother Nathaniel gives a vivid description of one of her performances.

"September 24th. [1841.]

"The other night I went to see Mdlle Rachel in *Horace*.¹ She really is an actress, such passion, such feeling does she depict that it is impossible to prevent oneself being carried away with her. In the fourth act when she uttered those impassioned lines against her brother she seemed like one inspired and produced such an effect upon the audience that they seemed perfectly bewildered ; in a minute however an overwhelming burst of applause broke forth from every part of the house ; even the transparent crystals hanging from the chandelier seemed to take part in the general enthusiasm, for they jingled one against the other . . ."

Joseph, in a letter to Anthony, shares his brother's enthusiasm.

"I have only seen Mademoiselle Rachel once" [he writes] "in *Roxane*. She is superior to any actor or actress I have ever seen. She is likewise, on the stage, very handsome. If Baron James patronised her, I do not think his only aim was the furtherance of theatrical art. Young the tragedian says she surpassed *Mrs Siddons*."

¹ It was in Corneille's play of this name that Rachel made her debut as Camille at the Theatre Français in June, 1838.

“As to Mademoiselle Rachel, she is completely *the rage*, and nothing can exceed the enthusiasm she has created. We saw her the first night of her performance, and really no words could convey an idea of her acting, nor sufficiently be said in her praise; I can only say that if any person ever approached perfection it is she. I hope, dear Lou, that you will have an opportunity of seeing her at Paris, as I am sure you would be in raptures with her . . .”

While Louisa is in England her brother, Nathaniel Montefiore, keeps her *au fait* with events in Paris. At the age of twenty-two he writes her the following boyish letter :

" January 9th, 1841.

“Last Wednesday, a great day, or rather, evening, I went to Court. There I was presented to His Majesty, the King,¹ afterwards to the Queen, Duc d’Orleans, and Princess. All these grand ladies and gentlemen honoured me with a few words. His Majesty asked : ‘How long I had been in Paris, &c., Queen, ‘If I had been in Syria ; how I liked Paris, &c. ;’ Princess, ‘If I meant to remain the winter’ &c., Duc d’Orleans, ‘If I did not think it cold’ &c., &c., &c. The conversation was more novel than interesting. The Royal family are exceedingly affable, particularly the Queen who chats away, just as if she was only Mrs. Snookes. Altogether I was very pleased I went. Next Wednesday there will be a ball given at the Palace, to which I presume I shall be invited. It is to be hoped that there will be a great many, for I want to wear my Court dress, which is too expensive an article to lay uselessly in my drawers. Last night I went to a ball given at the Embassy. It was crowded to excess, but notwithstanding, agreeable enough. I danced twice and managed to roam about till two o’clock this morning. I presume it was kept up to a late hour . . .

¹ Louis Philippe.

"I am much flattered at Mr Disi's¹ remarks about me. I was rather surprised to see his wife placed in Beauty's Book. For my part, I never knew that she was anything more than one of the numberless worshippers who stand or kneel in vain at her elegant altar, resembling very much diplomatic hangers on.

"Remember you, being a nervous, susceptible young female, ought to take great care of yourself during this cold weather. I am rather afraid that you are negligent in this particular; apt to run about without shawls &c. &c., and consequently catch cold. Thanking you again for key sealed ring.

"I remain, as ever, Your affectionate Brother,

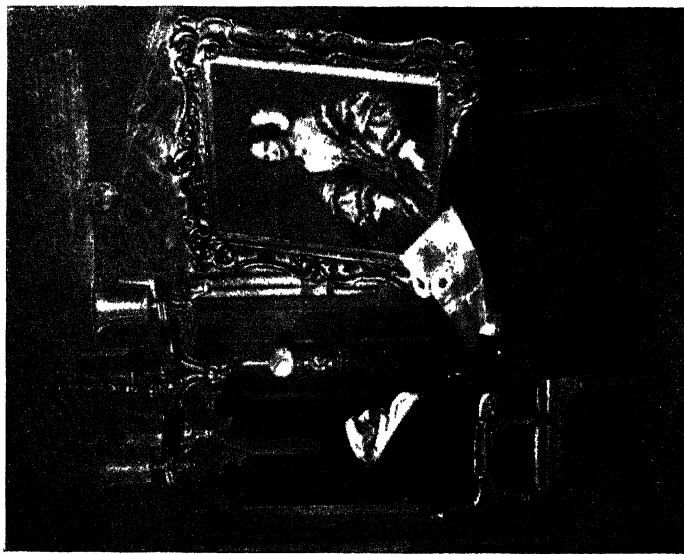
"N. MONTEFIORE."

I also include part of a letter from her aunt, Lady Montefiore, written while she and Sir Moses were on one of his many journeys taken on behalf of his unfortunate co-religionists in other lands. In 1840 he succeeded by his personal representations to the Sultan of Turkey in obtaining an imperial firman for the release of the Jews imprisoned in Damascus. This required no little courage and diplomacy, on account of the disturbed state of the country. He first interviewed the Khedive, Mahomed Ali, whose forces were in occupation of Syria, and whose claims were supported by the French, in opposition to the policy of England and her allies; but after the storming of St. Jean d'Acre the forces of the Khedive were ejected, and Damascus passed under the dominion of the Sultan, who granted Sir Moses' request.

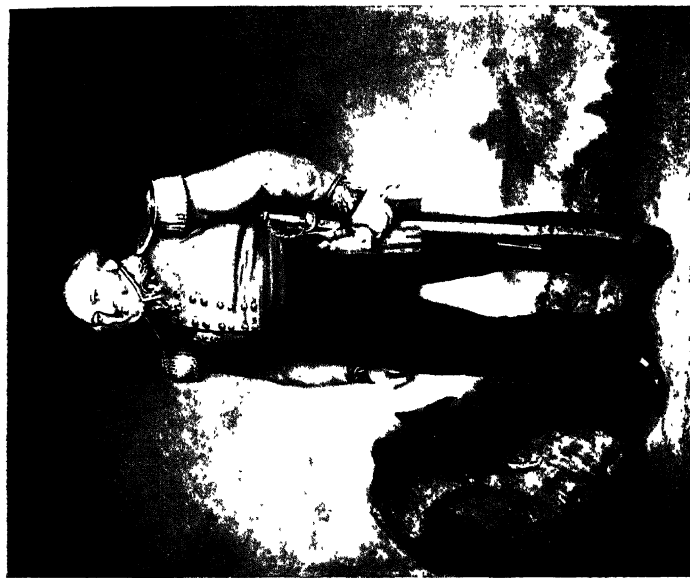
"Constantinople 16th October, 1840.

"We dined on Thursday last with Lord and Lady Ponsonby, they are extremely amiable and entertained us with a sumptuous dinner; they reside about six miles out of town, at a place called Therapia on the banks of the Bosphorus, near the mouth of the Black Sea. One

¹ The family spelling of the abbreviated form of Disraeli.



SIR MOSES IN HIS HUNDREDTH YEAR WITH PICTURE
OF HIS WIFE



SIR MOSES FROM A PICTURE BY S. A. HART, 1868.
By kind permission of Mr. Arthur Sebag Montefiore

may make the excursion by water but as two or three accidents had occurred the preceding day owing to tempestuous weather, we preferred the more sure way of going by land, and hired a Barouche for that purpose, which, owing to the state of the roads was obliged to be drawn by four horses. Most persons travel on horseback or by water, consequently the roads are totally neglected and after heavy showers of rain almost impassable. Our wheels frequently got into deep ruts which required all the dexterity of an expert and good tempered coachman to prevent an overturn. We had not to complain of want of exercise.

"After some alarms from the leaders turning round and ascending the banks, not liking the hills before them, we, after three hours driving, arrived with no other accident than a trial of nerves at the Hotel where rooms had been taken for the night. . . . The curious Turkish burying grounds step down from elevated spots to the water's edge, the tombstones engraved in Turkish characters, some decorated with gold and surmounted by turbans carved in stone, thickly interspersed with tall cypress—then divers towns and villages, ancient aquaducts, forming altogether a variety and novelty fully compensating.

"I rejoice to say that Montefiore has endured the fatigues and anxieties of the present journey much better than on former occasions and as the Almighty has crowned his efforts with the utmost success we have every cause to be grateful. I trust your Mamma is in the enjoyment of perfect health and spirits, in company of your sister and brothers to whom I beg my kind remembrances. . . ."

Sir Moses adds in a postscript to his wife's letter :

" . . . I trust a few weeks will bring us nearer to happy England. I think Mons. Thiers will use his endeavours to prevent our passing through France by kindling a war, but I do not believe he will succeed."

CHAPTER II

1847-1858

Books—Society—Friends—Thackeray—Rothschild relatives
—Politics—the Disraelis

AFTER an interlude of five years, during which her two children were born, Constance in 1843 and Annie two years later, Louisa resumes her journal in 1847, saying that she will not only record events, but

“my thoughts and feelings, the progress of my inward life and that of my children. It will be most interesting to me and of use to their education.”

Although she was now launched in the world, as we shall see, her spirit still seemed to dwell apart and her chief interest after her children was in books. It would, in fact, be impossible here to enumerate all her cosmopolitan and varied reading and her comments. I shall only choose a few, which seem to show something of her tastes in literature and critical faculty :

“...I have begun Macaulay's *History of England* which appears to me the perfection of history. . . .”

“...I have been reading Carlyle's *Miscellanies*—strange, original, difficult writing, which requires one to think and to ponder before one can understand it, but also strange, original, deep thoughts, which repay one for trouble and reflection. I was much pleased with his critique on Johnson's Life. One sees the great, fearless,

rough stone hewn man before one with his kind, affectionate heart and his strong, immoveable prejudices. On Scott, Carlyle is, I think, rather too severe. He was to be considered, not as a philosopher, nor moraliser, nor even poet, but as a novelist, and in that line he occupies a preeminent part among all his contemporaries. . . .”

“ . . . I am still reading Carlyle and am delighted with the greater part of his criticism. His article on Burns is excellent. One sees the poet with all his faults, one loves him the more almost for those very faults. . . .”

“ . . . I have been feasting upon novels: *L'Orgueil* by Eugene Sue and *Ten Thousand a Year*, which I do not like at all. The Author thinks he has written a very moral work, but it is impossible to meet with anything more prejudiced and intolerant; tradesmen, Jews and Unitarians being throughout represented as unprincipled, vulgar, heartless beings. The writer must be a bigotted Tory and I never wish to read any more of his productions.”

“ . . . I have at last finished Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. It is much too long, abounding in repetitions and in anecdotes too puerile to excite anything but a smile at Boswell's indiscriminating admiration for his hero. But, lengthy as it is, I read the ponderous volumes with much interest and closed them with a greater affection for Johnson than I had before. His acts were kind and good, though his words were rough and often more than rude. Though deeply prejudiced against those who differed from him in religion or in politics, he had no exalted opinion of his own merits—on the contrary, he was a far severer judge to himself than to others.”

“ . . . One passage in *Pendennis* pleased me from its truth. It was that on our *isolation* from even our dearest friends. I thought my luckless reserve was the cause of my feeling so and am delighted to see it shared by others. . . .”

“ . . . I am reading Heine's 'Allemagne.' It is extremely witty and amusing, but I cannot regard with anything but deep aversion his pantheistic doctrines and the slighting, mocking way he speaks of what is to many most sacred. To me the idea that all nature, spiritual and

material, is God seems as unreasonable as it is contrary to our wants, hopes and feelings, but when philosophy wishes to explain the inexplicable, to bring down to our finite comprehensions the infinite, it becomes itself incomprehensible, and that seems to me the case in Germany, where Spinoza's creed is the prevailing one."

Very many years later she wrote in 1876 :

"... Finishing Heine's life—what a martyrdom were the last years of his existence. Was it suffering and sorrow that changed his religious feelings, or, rather, gave him those feelings, which he had not before—faith in God and immortality? On me *circumstances* I think would have a contrary effect—happiness leading my soul up to the Author of all happiness. . . ."

Evidently Louisa de Rothschild suffered from a low vitality and must have led less of an outdoor life than was customary even in those days. There is no mention, as there is in her daughters' journals, of riding, hunting, or long walks, and her health deteriorated during her early married life, there being frequent allusions to fatigue and illness.

"... Last night was the Queen's Ball" [she writes on May 20th, 1848] "and to-day I am extremely tired, headache, and fit for nothing. Certainly the amusement I derive from parties is not worth a quarter of the fatigue they occasion me. . . ."

"... Am reading Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*—an interesting work, full of entertaining facts and detailed portraits of the reign of George II. An intimate acquaintance with courts gives one a distaste to monarchy. How much blood has been shed, how much poverty and misery occasioned, by the ambition or caprice of kings! . . ."

"... I had ten leeches on last night and have felt less sick to-day. . . ."

This is only one of several allusions to the somewhat disagreeable remedy in vogue at that

time. In further search of a cure, she tries the waters at Ems, but writes :

" . . . I feel far from well and I fear Ems will not have had the salutary influence I had hoped from it. However, my spirits are good and I am determined to be, if possible, cheerful and happy, though suffering and unwell."

Her health, no doubt, influenced her spirits, and may account for a self-depreciation which seems sometimes almost morbid.

" . . . I have strange moments of gloom and melancholy in which I feel as it were iced all over and cannot break through the frigid bondage. I have been liable from a child to these fits of desponding sadness. The best cure for them is active occupation. I wish I could have gone to Worth to-day—that would have done me good.

" Yesterday passed a pretty good Sabbath. Read Mrs. Fry, the Bible and Miss Ogilvy. I continue to be pleased with Mrs Fry's Life, but I wish religious persons did not change their style in writing or talking. . . . The moral courage conquering the natural timidity of Mrs Fry very interesting and encouraging to me who am such a coward, but will my moral courage ever be the victor ? I fear not. . . ."

Baron Lionel de Rothschild had married a beautiful Italian cousin, Charlotte, who had a gift for society which occasionally caused the retiring Louisa, almost in spite of herself, a few pangs of gentle mortification. It was at the house of this sister-in-law that Louisa de Rothschild used to meet many of the most distinguished men and women of her day.

Louisa de Rothschild writes in her journal in February 1848 :

" . . . Dined at C.L.'s ; [' Charlotte Lionel', Baroness Lionel de Rothschild] the Disis, M. Vigier, Mamma and the Emigrants [from the Revolution in Paris]. Madame

Nath¹ looked very well, high born, graceful and picturesque. I was tired and felt humbled as I often do in society from comparison, but this is likewise a species of vanity, for why should I be occupied at all about myself? How much happier should I be if I could *divest myself of myself* and forget the house which my soul must inhabit only for a short time and in which it can move as freely and as well as the inmates of more beautiful tenements around me."

She never seems to have realized how deep an impression she made on those with whom she came in contact. Queen Victoria told Lady Battersea many years later: "I have always understood that your mother was the pearl among the Rothschilds," while in 1844 Mrs. Montefiore writes to her daughter, with pardonable pride:

"Mrs Disi paid me a visit a few days ago, and is all in a fever about 'Coningsby'. She said Smyth and Lord John are in extasies. She began as usual to sing your praises and regret your absence. She told me, but pray don't get vain, Mr. Smyth said to her:—'Ask Mrs Anthony de Rothschild; she will understand "Coningsby" better than any of the family Rothschild. She has more brain than all the others together.' I am pleased with his good judgment and shall in return pay him a compliment. . . ."

Sir Anthony's love of magnificent hospitality did not always harmonize with his wife's very simple tastes and retiring nature, but it pleased his guests, as we see from the following letters from Lord Beaconsfield:

Hughenden Manor.

Dec. 30, 1869.

"MY DEAR SIR ANTHONY,

"A battalion of pheasants, and some hares, arrived here yesterday, without any label, but the porter said,

¹ The wife of Sir Anthony's brother, Nathaniel, and daughter of Baron James de Rothschild of Paris.

the game was for Hughenden, and that it had come from Aylesbury.

"No one in that direction could be so magnificent except yourself. You not only send many pheasants, but you send pheasants worth eating: nothing could be finer than those which preceded the last arrivals. There is no middle state in this bird. A pheasant is 'aut Cæsar, aut nihil.'

"We send the kindest wishes of the season to Aston Clinton.

"Ever yours,
"D."

Grosvenor Gate.

September 10th, 1872.

"MY DEAR AND MAGNIFICENT SIR ANTHONY!

"Mark Anthony himself was never so profusely gorgeous in his presents, as you are in your cases of Parisian pears and peaches! They justly entitle their creators to the name of the grand nation. Why were they not content? Why, with such fruit, did they ever go to war?

"We are still here. That tells our sad tale, but my wife insists upon it, that I am to say nothing depressing to her friends, and, therefore, I say no more. She received a letter from Lady de Rothschild yesterday which gave her much pleasure. It was from Como.

"We were never in London during this Season before. Our situation gives us some compensation in trees and vistaed bowers. We try to believe that the Park is not called Hyde, and to forget that the bowers are the bowers of Kensington.

"Lady Beaconsfield sends you her thanks and her kindest regards.

"I hope for the credit of the county the young partridges came from Aston.

"Yours ever,
"B."

Lady de Rothschild, however, writes:

"To-day we have our first grand dinner party—our first grand bore. I am nervous and fidgety, principally because the rooms are so smart—much too smart for my taste. What trouble we take, what expense we

go to for the so called pleasures of society ! How much more real pleasure it would give one to perform an act of generosity or to make, even, a kindly present, but I cannot follow my own inclination in this matter, and strange to say, I, who am so anti-luxurious in tastes and habits am made to appear fond of show and glitter. That is one of my vexations and I must try to bear it patiently and then the gilded walls may be of some use and read me a lesson of humility and patience. . . .”

“ Our dinner went off pretty well, though we had not smart ladies enough. The rooms were much admired but, to my delight, not apparently thought too smart. . . .”

When she had a friendly party she enjoyed herself as much as anybody :

“ Yesterday we had our first dinner party. It went off pretty well, thanks to Charles Villiers and Lord Morley, who were merry and agreeable. C. Villiers was in high form, occasionally relating anecdotes which had better remained untold. Mr. Osborne *ranted* and old Rogers,¹ a venerable relic of former days, tried to be amusing—but failed. He made one very true and pretty remark : ‘ people call church-yards melancholy land ; a walk through the streets of London is far more melancholy to me, for then how many dwellings remind me of friends dead and gone ! ’

“ . . . On Thursday dined at Mamma’s—a gay little party. I was very well amused, having Charles Villiers for my neighbour, who is as anxious to be agreeable as he is clever. . . .”

Charles Villiers, the statesman, who later became known as “ the Father of the House of Commons,” was a man whom Lady de Rothschild always found agreeable and was pleased to meet, as will be seen from many of the entries quoted in this chapter. She first mentions him in 1847, just after beginning her journal :

“ . . . Dined at Lady Braye’s and passed a pleasant

¹ The poet and author of *Table Talk*.

evening. Merry and chatty during dinner with my neighbours, Mr. Rose and Lord G——. Charles Villiers sat opposite to me. I knew him by his particularly dark blue eyes. He has a fine, intelligent countenance. . . .”

Ten years later, when Baroness Lionel de Rothschild meets him on his travels, his appearance sounds less attractive.

Aix-la-Chapelle. Sunday.

“ . . . Our circle has received an agreeable addition in the person of Charles Villiers. He is in wonderful spirits, though not likely to be sent either to the South or to the West. His toilette is even less carefully attended to than in London. His hair is a perfect wilderness, a virgin forest, and looks as if no brush had ever penetrated through its mazes ; he uses spectacles when he reads, and talks of consulting a Quack at Koblenz. . . . He remains a keen politician, and an ardent widow-worshipper, but he is also a thankful guest ; he spoke with true gratitude of all the excellent dinners he had eaten and all the delightful society he had enjoyed under your roof.”

In her journal Lady de Rothschild describes another “ very agreeable dinner at Mamma’s.”

“ . . . I sat between Mr Thackeray and Charles Villiers ! They were both amusing and good natured, but when I am most anxious to appear least stupid I often am most so and that was my case then. C.L.¹ never becomes embarrassed and that is one cause of her liking and being liked by *society*. Thackeray was not so satirical as usual and I fancy we might become very good friends.”

Her first meeting with Thackeray was in August, 1848, as they journeyed down the Rhine on her way home from Ems.

“ BONNE. . . . We had a delightful journey down the Rhine, the first time I ever amused myself on its (to me) most monotonous waters. Primo—in honour to the Archduke who was steaming down the Rhine at the

¹ “ Charlotte Lionel,” Baroness Lionel de Rothschild.

same time as ourselves, every village, every hamlet and every boat was crowded with holiday folks and decked with flags of all the different German states.

"Processions of National Guards with moving banners were seen gliding from romantic glens and marching on the banks of their national river, and every now and then, above the drums and the fifes, sounded a salute of canons or of guns.

"The second, but greater, charm of our day's journey was Mr. Thackeray's presence. Strange enough, we made acquaintance directly and he remained with us the whole day. We talked of literature, drawings, Jews, of whom he has a bad opinion, politics, etc., and we parted very good friends—at least I fancy so. He seems a good and an honest man, with a kind heart, notwithstanding a large fund of satire. I like him better than his books."

Lady Battersea remembered this meeting to the end of her life, as she was startled when Thackeray took her up in his arms and, poising her on his shoulders, walked up and down the steamer, telling her fairy-tales.

This acquaintance, begun on the boat, was continued, and we hear of Thackeray calling on Lady de Rothschild in London :

"... On Tuesday Thackeray called. He was amusing and good natured and I felt again quite at my ease. ..."

"... In the evening dined at Charlotte's. Mr Higgins,¹ C. Villiers, the Phipps and the Beaumonts. Mrs Phipps looked very handsome, Lady Beaumont very insignificant. I sat next to Mr Higgins ; though clever, I do not think him very agreeable ; there is something cold and hard about him, he never, or at least, seldom, tries to please ; one admires and respects his earnest, sincere, straightforward character, but one is not charmed or fascinated by him. I fell into a little reverie about Mr Thackeray who is far more sympathetic than his friend. Shall I continue to like him, I wonder, or will the few, short, pleasant hours we spent together never be repeated ? "

¹ "Jacob Omnium," essayist.

Her fears were unfounded, as she writes later of "a pleasant little dinner" at which Thackeray was present, and further :

"... On Sunday Thackeray called. He was amiable and agreeable, but when he talked of so many of the great, the beautiful and the clever who are all anxious to attract his notice and admiration, I felt that he must be a *little* spoilt, or at least that there was not much to attract him here."

"... The dinner went off pretty well. I was very agreeably placed and perhaps Mr. Thackeray's vicinity helped to make the dinner pass quicker and acted as a cordial upon my health. C. Villiers was my other neighbour, but amusing as he is, I greatly prefer Thackeray, because he joins to wit and humour and fun deep and good feeling, which he is never ashamed of showing and which makes one like, as well as admire him. . . ."

"... I was delighted with Thackeray's lectures and look forward with great pleasure to the third. They are not the least instructive and deal not with facts or deeds, they are not biographical nor literary criticisms—but original thoughts inspired by Congreve, Addison or Swift. The Humourists of the Eighteenth Century are merely the butts for the humourist of the Nineteenth to preach, poetize and *humorise* upon."

"Yesterday I had a great treat—Thackeray's lecture. It was upon Sterne and Goldsmith and I thought the best of the series. I am very sorry it is the last ; it was something so pleasant to look forward to every week.

"I did not look upon it as a lecture but as a conversation with Thackeray—in which he had the greater part of the talking to himself and my replies were mental. . . ."

"On Friday an agreeable visit from Thackeray . . ."

"... Yesterday . . . in the afternoon Thackeray called—very agreeable as he always is en tête à tête. Singularly enough he expressed what I had been thinking all the morning, that love is short-lived and that without any apparent reason the being who has inspired us with passionate affection, at whose dear presence our heart has throbbed and our cheek turned pale, becomes perfectly

indifferent to us. I had never experienced it, but I felt such might be the case, and with Thackeray it evidently has been the case. . . ."

Her admiration for him was reciprocated. In *Pendennis* there occurs a passage, which is always said to be an allusion to Lady de Rothschild :

"I saw a Jewish Lady only yesterday with a child at her knee and from whose face towards the child there shone a sweetness so angelical that it seemed to form a sort of glory round both."

Sometimes he illustrated his letters as shown here :



Kennington, Decr. 25.

Dear Lady Rothschild

It has not been Anne's fault but mine that the two most beautiful bon-bon-baskets I ever saw have come into this house and given the greatest delight to the children whom you remembered so kindly, and

He was also a great friend of Baron Lionel de Rothschild, whose wife writes in 1856 :

"... Did I tell you that Thackeray, whose tender inquiries after you and yours I am afraid I never transmitted, carried off our excellent little doctor's¹ commentary into his room and fell delightfully asleep over it. He had passed several restless nights without closing an eye,

¹ Dr. Kalisch

but 'Exodus' acted as a powerful narcotic by broad daylight, and Evy¹ who entered the study of the great writer one sunny morning with a message to his daughters, found the latter perpetrating a portrait of their slumbering, dreaming sire, who must have had enchanting visions, for he talked of Venus and Cupid and not at all of Moses and Aaron."

Lady de Rothschild also kept a letter referring to Thackeray's lectures on the Georges :

Aberdeen, March 17, 1857.

"DEAR LADY ROTHSCHILD,

"I hope you know that I am murdering the 4 Georges in Scotland and never heard of your beautiful party till the flowers were all dead, the dancers all in bed, the candles all out, the supper all eaten, the ices all melted, and the plate all locked up.

"How long this business of George-killing is to last I don't know, but I have months yet of the House of Brunswick before me. Heaven bless them! I never thought my late gracious Sovereign would put so many 100£ in the pockets of

"Yours always to command, W. M. THACKERAY."

Another of her friends was Miss Berry.

"... Yesterday I accompanied Charlotte to Lady John Russell and Miss Berry. Lady John Russell is a very clever, amiable little person. She received us most courteously; not so her Lord who was cold, stiff and proud. They have a delightful villa in the middle of Richmond Park. We saw several little Russells playing in the garden. One of them struck me by her great likeness to Lord John; the same thin, sharp, clear features, softened, of course, by childhood.

"We found poor Miss Berry far from well, but as lively, amusing and as anxious to please, or rather to afford pleasure, as ever. She spoke of death as fast approaching and said she had no wish to live longer. Were these her real sentiments or was she deceiving herself? Seeing the subject was a sad one to us, she changed it, though

¹ Daughter of Baron Lionel.

she said why should we make a tragedy of it? But I am sure her death must be a tragedy to all who know her. . . .”

“ . . . We went to the *Miss Berrys*. Found Mary delightful as ever. She was evidently enchanted with Horace Walpole’s letter in praise of herself and her sister and she prettily and unaffectedly avowed it. I came back, dressed in a hurry and dined at Charlotte’s, thus having hardly one quiet moment. Mr Villiers and the Weisweillers dined there. Mr V. was amusing and natural. . . .”

“ THURSDAY NOVEMBER 25th, 1852 On the 21st of this month Miss Berry died, the brightest, cleverest and most amiable of all old women. It is a real sorrow to think that one will never see that time-defying face again, never more receive one of her pleasant, hearty welcomes. . . .”

“ Was introduced to Lady Davy who interested me with anecdotes of the great departed—she is an amusing old woman, but how different from poor dear Miss Berry who was more youthful than the young, in spirit and in conversation. Lady Davy has the peculiarities of age and seems wrapped up in the past, whereas Miss Berry seemed to have found the elixir of youth and whilst she retained a lively and grateful memory of the past, had the warmest sympathies with the present. . . .”

In 1846 Sir Anthony was created a baronet, his elder brother, Lionel, head of the English house, having refused this honour.

Their mother did not die until 1850, and she seems to have exercised a great deal of influence over their lives. She was a woman of great force of character, and it was owing to her that the sons settled in Buckinghamshire, as she considered that they could not get enough exercise while leading their sedentary city lives, and advocated their taking up hunting during the winter. She seems to have rather overawed her niece and daughter-in-law, Louisa, who writes of her visit to her country house at Gunnersbury :

"We came here last night. I felt my usual *chill* creep over me when we advanced through the stately carriage drive to the stately mansion and were received in rather a stately manner by Aunt. By degrees, however, I became accustomed to the changed atmosphere. They were in good spirits, Charlotte [her sister-in-law] as ever, very amiable, and the evening passed pleasantly enough." "... I feel very melancholy to-day; Anthony is at Paris and Charlotte and her children leave Gunnersbury so that I shall be left all alone with Aunt. Time must pass, however, whether pleasantly or otherwise, and I do not suppose I shall be here longer than a fortnight. ..."

Throughout the journal, we meet with frequent references to Sir Anthony's youngest sister, another Louisa, who married a German cousin, Charles de Rothschild. They lived at Gunthersburg, their country house near Frankfort. Baroness Charles must have had a charming disposition, and Lady de Rothschild says :

"I suppose it is her truthfulness and simplicity that render her so attractive. . . . Her friendship is very dear to me and her sound sense and truthfulness are of great use to me. . . ."

She had seven daughters, ranging from the same age as Constance and Annie, and we shall find frequent references to both mother and children. The sisters-in-law kept up an active correspondence. I quote from one of the letters from Baroness Charles to Lady de Rothschild.

It is written in 1842, and after telling something of Frankfort society, most of which she seems to have found very dull, continues :

"... I have made the acquaintance of another remarkable person, namely Mme d'Arnim, better known under the appellation of *Bettina*, whose correspondence with Goethe when a child you are doubtless acquainted with.

Charles knew her very well at Berlin, and I paid a visit to her the other evening. Fancy a very little woman, with not a vestige of good looks, her hair dyed, and scarcely combed out, wearing an old black silk dress, put on so carelessly that nothing seemed in its right place. In spite of so unpromising an exterior, I had not been with her during many minutes before I entirely forgot how she looked, and became enchanted with her animated and agreeable conversation, her odd remarks, and above all the kindness and warmth of her manner. She says anything that comes into her head ; will look at you for five minutes together and then say that you either please or displease her. She told *me* that she liked me, or perhaps (for such is the self-love of us poor mortals) I might not speak so favourably of her as I have done. But it is certain that all who know her intimately are quite fascinated by her wit and originality, especially gentlemen, for ladies, I believe, she does not so often honour with her attention. She has three daughters, all good-looking, and talented, who I daresay form another attraction to her salon. . . .”

The first of the English Rothschilds to enter politics was Baron Lionel de Rothschild. He was considered to be the original of Sidonia in Disraeli's *Coningsby*. It is interesting to see the intense excitement with which members of the family followed the progress of the Bill enabling the Jews to sit in Parliament.

The first mention of this in Lady de Rothschild's diary is of Lady Lyndhurst in 1847 calling and speaking of Baron Lionel's election, saying she was

“astonished at Milord's being in his favour. She thinks Lionel will be elected, but not allowed to sit. What a scene we shall have in the House of Commons !”

Lady Lyndhurst's prognostication came true :

From Lady de Rothschild's diary :

" JULY 29th, 1847 : Was the grand day of the London Election. Lionel had a larger majority than the most sanguine expected and his triumph was complete. It was an anxious, agitating, but highly interesting day. Everyone exerted herself to the utmost and I think Lionel ought to feel grateful to all the family. To-day I feel dreadfully tired and low spirited as one does after any great event which has long occupied one and is over. . . ."

" DECEMBER 19th, 1847 : The first reading of the Jews' Bill passed the House on Tuesday by a majority of sixty-seven. We were in the House and spent there eight interesting but most fatiguing hours.

" The debate was but indifferent and the only time any great enthusiasm was shown was when our opponents screamed out their 'noes.' Charlotte was dreadfully excited ; I cannot say that I was, nor had the violence or ill nature of a few of the enemies of the Bill much effect upon me. Was this coldness or indifference on my part ? I think not. On the whole we were very courteously treated and we could not expect all prejudice, bigotry and dislike to be silent. . . ."

" MAY 5th, 1848 : . . . Last night our Bill was read for the third and last time in the House of Commons and carried by a majority of sixty-one. Lord John Russell made, I thought, the only good speech on the subject."

" MAY 30th, 1848 : . . . On Thursday our Bill was read in the House of Lords, and after a long and violent debate, thrown out by a majority of thirty-five. The speeches against the admission of Jews into Parliament were intolerant and bigoted and calumnious. The Bishop of Oxford, in particular, spoke like a fiery, zealous, unscrupulous, *party man*, and not the least like a *clerical* one. I was quite sorry that Wilberforce's son should have made such a display.

" Having sat up till three in the morning and received a severe disappointment, I felt quite ill on Friday. . . ."

Her sister, Charlotte¹ (Mrs. Horatio Montefiore), writes at this time :

" . . . I was indignant and pained and excited not at our defeat so much as at some of the speeches. Wilberforce is not good enough for Christian or Jew. Ah me, when will religion be understood—be felt to be not a matter of mere creed and of doctrine but a spirit breathing love and peace and charity, binding us all lovingly to God, uniting all human beings together as brothers—I am sick of the appellations 'Christian' and 'Jew'—they are but names for intolerance and persecution. . . ."

Further extracts from Lady de Rothschild's journal read :

" JULY 3rd, 1848 : On Tuesday evening, the 29th of June, our Bill was read, but, alas, the House was counted out and till next year it must live in retirement and repose."

" FEBRUARY 20th, 1849 : Last night went to the House of Commons and heard a debate on the *new Bill* of Lord John Russell for the alteration of the oath. Lord John made a very clear, earnest speech, and Mr. Gladstone delivered a fine, silvery toned one in our favour. Seven oppositionists attacked it, but not very brilliantly and *Disi* was silent. Mrs Disi was right when she spoke of the changes that Friendships undergo, last year he was our warmest champion and now !

" We had a capital majority of 103—but I fear that will diminish on the next reading."

" MAY 8th, 1849 : Last night went with Charlotte to the House of Commons, the second reading of our Bill. The debate was languid, only enhanced by the maiden speech of Mr. Peel ; the usually calm, unmoved statesman listening with trembling agitation to his son's words and then drinking in the long and loud cheers with which they were greeted by the House was a most interesting sight. The division was greatly in our favour, the majority being 93.

To-day I feel knocked up and out of spirits. It is strange how I alter ; one day all seems sunshine to me, the next all dark and gloom. . . ."

" JUNE 14th, 1849 : . . . On Monday our Bill was read for the last time in the House of Commons. The

division was not a very brilliant one—majority 66—and no one seems sanguine about its success in the House of Lords.”

“JUNE 28th, 1849: On Thursday went to the House of Lords with Charlotte. Was there from five till twelve-thirty. The debate, though interesting to us, was rather dull and cold; however, there were some very good speeches. The Duke of Argyll spoke in his fine, deep voice a few impressive words; the Bishop of Oxford poured forth an eloquent torrent of not very sound argument; the Archbishop of Dublin reasoned well, though without any *entrainement*; but Lord Brougham's was the great speech of the night, alternately witty and grave, he amused and delighted the House, but alas! did not persuade—for we lost by a majority of 25.

“Yesterday I amused myself very much at dinner at Aunt's. Sat next to Lord John Manners—talked of books, drawings, &c.

“JULY 26th, 1850: A quiet day and an exciting evening. Aunt, C.L. and Mr Smith¹ dined with us and we discussed the City meeting and Lionel's proceedings. He is this day to walk into the House and offer to take his seat. What the result may be I have no idea, but only hope it will not necessitate another election. I still feel as deeply interested in the cause as ever, but circumstances have made me less zealous. . . .”

“JULY 31st, 1850: . . . Nothing is yet decided in the House but it seems most probable that Lionel will not be unseated and that is all I care for this Session. . . .”

“FRIDAY, MAY 2nd, 1851: . . . In the evening there was a sad display of English bigotry and intolerance. Our Bill was read a second time in the House of Commons and only passed by a majority of *twenty-five*. . . .”²

¹ John Abel Smith, a Liberal M.P., and one of Baron Lionel's supporters when he took his seat in the House of Commons.

² In June, 1851, Sir David Salamons was returned as Liberal member for Greenwich. He took his seat after omitting from his oath “on the true faith of a Christian,” and voted, for which he was liable to a fine and he was ejected from the House. He took the case to the law courts—but it was decided against him. He was re-elected several times and finally took his seat in 1859.

"WEDNESDAY, JULY 30th, 1851: . . . On Monday I went with Charlotte and Mamma to the dear House of Commons where we heard the end of our old debate. The majorities against us were large but the arguments were feeble and I feel a strong conviction that we shall carry it next Session."

"SATURDAY, JULY 3rd, 1852: . . . Anthony much excited about the coming elections; I do not feel as much interest about it as I ought and should wish to do. On Charlotte's account principally, I hope there may be no contested election or that Lionel may be returned, as his defeat would be a great disappointment to her. On *national* grounds, I fear I do not care much about it. . . ."

"MONDAY, JULY 12th, 1852: Lionel was returned and on the day of the election I felt excited, *malgré moi*. . . ."

It was not until 1858 that Baron Lionel was finally able to take his seat in the House of Commons.

Disraeli was an old friend of both sides of the family, and in early days he used often to dine with Mrs. Montefiore and her daughters. From her journal, Lady de Rothschild never seems to have been quite at her ease with him, nor very sure of what line of conduct he would take, either in politics or society, and we can see that he did not easily blend with the family life.

". . . Yesterday the Disis, Charlotte and Lionel dined with us. Mrs Disi was looking remarkably well and as usual an odd mixture of *good sense* and *non sense*, of amusing humour and gaiety and of no less amusing absurdity, but I must like her, for she is, I am sure, *really true*. Disi was extremely affected with the children, but in good spirits and not too grand to be amiable. He spoke of the Jews' life in his strange, Tancredian strain, saying we must ask for our rights and privileges, not for concessions and liberty of conscience. I wonder if he will have the courage to speak to the House in the same manner."

". . . Mrs Disi was in boisterous gaiety, but Disi looked

grave and rather moody because he was not the centre of attraction."

"... Yesterday saw Mr Villiers and the Disis. There is certainly something inspiring in the presence of clever men, but one feels *lamentably stupid* by comparison. Disi was less condescending than usual, therefore I liked him better. I cannot help feeling also when I listened to him a sort of pride in the thought that he belongs to us—that he is one of Israel's sons. . . ."

Writing just after Disraeli's first budget had been thrown out by a coalition, she says :

"FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17th, 1852: Last night finished the debate on the budget and the Ministers were beaten! Poor Mrs Disraeli, I feel grieved when I think of what her feelings must be to-day. But where there is triumph, fame and glory there must be sometimes blights and shadows; it is only the obscure who know not the pangs of wounded ambition.

"On Monday night again at the House for seven hours—much interested, I think it is now my favourite amusement, the play saddens me but the debates excite and amuse me. . . ."

"SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26th, 1852: Heard and talked of nothing but the new government. FitzRoy¹ has got a capital place. . . . Osborne will probably accept office and so Whigs, Peelites and Radicals will be all represented in the Ministry, a curious medley. . . ."

"THURSDAY, DECEMBER 30th: Poor FitzRoy's place given to Osborne!² Under Secretary for the Home Office accepted by the former. Yesterday dined at Charlotte's. FitzRoy and Villiers. Charles Villiers talked in his usual amusing, good tempered but sneering way of everybody, which made FitzRoy very angry. The latter has such ardent feelings and deep convictions that the trifling indifference of the former must be most

¹ Hon. Henry FitzRoy—leader of the Peelites under Lord Aberdeen—husband of Hannah Mayer de Rothschild (see page 11).

² He was made Secretary of the Admiralty.

discordant to him. H.M. is furious they say with Mr. Osborne and intends never speaking to him again which Charlotte declares she can *quite* understand. . . .”

In spite of this strong feeling, however, Mr. Bernal Osborne, a very amusing and well-known Irishman, remained a great friend of the Rothschild family.

A few days later she again met Disraeli, still smarting from his political defeat :

“TUESDAY, JANUARY 11th, 1853 : . . . Dined at Charlotte’s. Sat next to Disraeli who looked perfectly wretched. Dull obscurity, unenvied mediocrity, thought I, yours are perhaps after all the sweet garlands of happiness. Mrs Disraeli was also much out of spirits. Had Disraeli ever wished to carry out any great principle, or to bring forward some truly useful measures, he would not be so cast down ; he would feel that in or out of office he had high and noble duties to perform and that his talents need never be unused—but his own elevation having been his only aim, he has nothing now to sweeten the bitter cup of ill success. The Duchess of Somerset desperately in love with him. What could have fascinated *her* in *him* ? . . .”

“THURSDAY, JANUARY 20th, 1853 : . . . Dined at the Duchess of Somerset’s. Very well amused, having Cervini for my neighbour. The Disis were there, and Mr. Disi quite a different man, looking well and in good spirits, Mrs. Disi was not so lively as usual and rather stiff, I thought, with me. . . .”

On another occasion she mentions “Disi” at a dinner-party at her mother’s house as appearing “gloomy and sad.”

Her affection for Mrs. Disraeli seems much less half-hearted :

“ . . . Mrs. Disi said :—‘ We are all envious and ungrateful.’ I plead guilty to the former, not to the latter. Mrs. Disi talked well as one who possesses good powers of observation ; strange that she should be blind to her

¹ The Hon. Mrs. FitzRoy.

own absurdities ; however, notwithstanding them all, I like her, for she has a warm, true heart."

"I rattled away and passed a pleasant evening. Mrs Disi said my *only* fault—that is my great fault—was want of expansion, she is quite right and has given me another proof of her penetration."

"MAY 11th, 1848: . . . On Tuesday we dined at the Reventlows. The Disis, the Dillons, the Mathesons, &c., were the guests. Disi looked ill and gloomy, Mrs. D. I thought *trying* to be gay. She was rather angry with me and very sharp, but *au fond* she is a good hearted woman."

" . . . On Thursday Mrs Disi called *en costume de Cour*. She was very good natured to do so after the fatigue of the Drawing Room. I am sure she wanted to make it up. I must soon call upon her . . ."

" . . . Last evening was rather a merry one—Mrs. Disi, Lydia" [a cousin] "and Mamma were my guests, and they were all in good spirits and *en train* to please and to be pleased. . . . Mrs Disi was amusing and quick and just in her observations. . . . In her constant smile there is perhaps a want of sincerity, but her enthusiasm is truthful and genuine, her heart is really kind and her talents of no ordinary description . . ."

The picture of Mrs. Disraeli would not be complete without the following dramatic description taken from a letter from Baroness Lionel de Rothschild to Louisa :

" 10th September, 1845.

" . . . I'll tell you a secret that will astonish you, if aught relating to our excellent and eccentric friend Mrs Disraeli can possibly produce an impression, a feeling of that kind. About a week after Hannah Mayer had been pronounced out of danger and the clock had struck six there was a visitor ringing and pulling at the bell, and into the room, and presently into my reluctant arms rushed Mrs. Disi.

"I am quite out of breath, my dear, I have been running so fast, we have no horses, no carriage, no servants, we are going abroad, I have been so busy correcting proof-sheets, the publishers are so tiresome, we ought to have been gone a month ago ; I should have

called upon you long ere now, I have been so nervous, so excited, so agitated, poor Dis' has been sitting up the whole night writing; I want to speak to you on business, pray send the darling children away' &c., &c., for it would, without any exaggeration, take more than ten pages to put down conscientiously all the lady's words, not noting exclamations and gestures and tears. You know, dear Louisa, that I am easily terrified and almost speechless. I had never seen her in such a state of excitement before, and all I could do was to gasp out—'Has anything happened?'

"Mrs Disraeli heaved a deep sigh and said: 'This is a farewell visit, I may never see you again—life is so uncertain, poor Mrs Fitzroy has been so very, very ill, Disi and I may be blown up on the rail-road or in the steamer, there is not a human body that loves me in this world, and besides my adored husband I care for no one on earth, but I love your glorious race, I am rich, I am prosperous, I think it right to entertain serious thoughts, to look calmly upon one's end' &c., &c.

"Mrs Disraeli's conversation is not exactly remarkable for clearness of thought, precision of language, or for a proper concatenation of images, ideas and phrases, nevertheless, I had always been able to comprehend and to reply, but on that memorable Friday, I was quite at a loss to understand her meaning. *Je vous fais grace de mes réponses*, as they are not particularly interesting. I tried to calm and quiet my visitor who, after having enumerated her goods and chattels to me, took a paper out of her pocket saying: 'This is my Will and you must read it, show it to the dear Baron, and take care of it for me.' I answered that she must be aware of my feelings, that I should ever be truly grateful for such a proof of confidence, but could not accept such a great responsibility. 'But you must listen,' replied the inexorable lady: she opened the paper and read aloud:

"'In the event of my beloved Husband preceding me to the grave, I leave and bequeath to Evelina de Rothschild [Baroness Lionel's daughter aged six] all my personal property.'

“ I leave you to picture to yourself my amazement and embarrassment. Mrs Disraeli rose and would hear no answer, no objection.

“ ‘ I love the Jews—I have attached myself to your children and she is my favourite, she shall, she must wear the butterfly.’ Away rushed the testatrix, leaving the testament in my unworthy hands. I passed a miserable night, witnessing all the horrors of boilers bursting on the rail-road and steamboats being blown up, and seeing myself as chief mourner at our poor friend’s funeral. Then there was a Ball at the French Embassy ; I was an old Mamma and Evy looked over-powered by the weight of the emerald tiara, and the diamond butterfly was fluttering round her shoulders. The next morning I breakfasted in a hurry, walked in a hurry to the abode of genius and his wife, to whom I returned the Will. There was a scene, a very disagreeable one, and then all was over—*the dream and the reality. . . .*”

In spite of her little oddities, Lord Beaconsfield fully appreciated his wife’s character, and to illustrate this Lady Battersea used often to tell how she was asked with her parents to meet him in the first months of his bereavement in 1873 :

“ when he was not by way of going into society, but had told his old friend Lady Hardwicke that he would be quite glad to see my parents quietly under their roof. After dinner Dizzy approached me, conducted me into a comfortable seat, and placing himself beside me talked to me at length of his lost happiness, and of the great qualities indispensable to a happy married life : ‘ Sympathy,’ he said, and repeated it over and over again, ‘ Sympathy goes before beauty or talent. Sympathy—and that is what I have had ! ’ He never spoke to anyone else the whole evening, rather to the astonishment of my father, who feared that I might grow vain or conceited at such a distinguishing mark of friendship from so great a personage.”

CHAPTER III

1848-1857

Events abroad

IN Lady de Rothschild's diary we read how, in 1848, the even tenor of their lives was broken by the political upheaval in Europe.

"FEBRUARY 1848: It is impossible to think of or occupy oneself with anything but this wonderful Revolution. I cannot say, however, that the effect it may have upon our fortunes disturbs me at all. This is not philosophy, but simple indifference, or, rather, dislike to grandeur and display. I should feel, however, diminishing our establishment or diminishing the expenses of my *Poor Book* but as yet there appears no necessity for anything of the kind. The King and Queen are now safe in England as well as Guizot. Poor Louis Philippe! What a difference from his last visit to these shores.

"I have just been reading the 39th Psalm. How strangely applicable it is to the events of the last most eventful week. 'Surely every man walketh in a vain shew; surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches and knoweth not who shall gather them.'"

"MONDAY: Bad news from Paris. Spent a wretched night. Poor Anthony, nervous and unhappy, dreading the worst. But, after all, what is the worst in this case in comparison with so many other misfortunes which might befall one? The loss of eyesight; the loss, or even *the fear* of the loss of a child. I feel that I could bear up very well with a change of fortune, but Anthony's distress takes away all my courage.

" WEDNESDAY : The last few days rather overcast. Paris is at present like a great cauldron in which strange ingredients are mingling together ; will a devouring monster arise from it, or fair and peaceful order ? The former, alas, seems the more probable of the two. . . . "

" THURSDAY : A restless, anxious night. Financial affairs appear to be at their crisis. How will it all end ? If our house can only weather the storm I shall be quite contented and shall not care for any losses, however severe. . . . "

" Read *Michel Servet* in the *Revue Des Deux Mondes* and derived some consolation from the evident superiority of the nineteenth over the sixteenth century. Surely the French will not make us retrograde to the ages of bloodshed and intolerance ! Surely liberty will not demand like the religion, or, rather, irreligion of our forefathers human sacrifices !

" Mrs Disi called, good hearted and kind. How is it that women are so easily put out by trifles and bear great misfortunes and trials with so much resignation and fortitude ? "

" FRIDAY, 17th : Nath [Sir Anthony's brother] left yesterday to return to Paris, full of evil forebodings. Poor man ! May they not be realised. Mamma, Aunt, C. and Lionel dined here, a melancholy party, followed by a bad night. This morning, however, things look somewhat less dark. People seem to be regaining a little courage in France and begin to remonstrate against the revolutionary duress of some of the measures of the Provisional Government. Lamartine made a soothing and peaceful speech. Would that he had the power to enforce what he so eloquently advocates. "

" SUNDAY, 19th : The financial news from Paris much better and our fear for the present at least allayed. "

" MONDAY, 20th : Our private news continues much better, but how much ruin and misery has the Revolution not caused already ? Will it ever accomplish sufficient good to compensate for all this evil ?

" M. Vigier arrived yesterday from Paris, as merry and as noisy as ever—laughing and gesticulating whilst relating his fears and hopes. Such is a Frenchman ! . . . "

" APRIL 7th: Received a letter yesterday from poor Mr Corajad. Written to him to-day and sent him twenty pounds. What a pleasure, nay, what a blessing it is to be *able to give*. How long shall we enjoy it ? "

" APRIL 9th: . . . Dined at Piccadilly.¹ The FitzRois. H.M.² looked extremely well and pretty. Mr FitzRoy was in good spirits. Talked of the anticipated Chartists' meeting and of Ireland. He thinks the loss of the latter would be England's gain.

" The news from the Continent is better again. We are cheered by a feeble, may it not be a fleeting, ray of sunshine."

" APRIL 10th: As yet all is quiet. I have heard nothing of the great Chartist meeting, and I hope therefore that the preparations and warlike demonstrations will have alarmed the mob. . . ."

" APRIL 18th: . . . The news from Paris is satisfactory. The National Guard seem determined to maintain order and tranquility. Will they be strong enough to succeed ? . . ."

" APRIL 23rd: . . . On Tuesday afternoon I had several visits, among them dear Lady Morley who told me the following lines on the French Republic :

" Liberté de mal faire,
Egalité de misère,
Fraternité de Cain à son Frère. . . ."

" APRIL 25th: Paid some family visits yesterday with C.L.³ Came home very tired and in much pain and dined at Piccadilly. Nath⁴ arrived last night. He is in much better spirits and no longer thinks this will be a *sanguinary revolution*—our *purses alone* will bleed. . . ."

" JUNE 27th: . . . The news from Paris is dreadful. On the 24th the streets were filled with combatants and an immense quantity of blood was shed ; how many widows, mothers and sisters must be mourning now ! . . ."

" JUNE 28: Yesterday was a sad, anxious day. In

¹ The home of her mother-in-law.

² " Hannah Mayer "—the Hon. Mrs. FitzRoy.

³ " Charlotte Lionel "—Baroness Lionel de Rothschild.

⁴ Sir Anthony's brother, Nathaniel, who lived in Paris.

the morning we had alarming accounts from Paris which were even surpassed by a letter we received in the evening from Cologne. At last however, thank God, the senseless mob appears to be defeated, but it is triumph dearly bought by a three days' carnage and a host of victims ! The description of the fury and cruelty of these new revolutionists is appalling and seems to show that civilisation—that civilisation of the nineteenth century of which we were so proud—was only on the surface of society and had left untouched the fierce, rugged hearts of the lower classes. . . .”

“JULY 1st: . . . I received letters this morning from Joseph and Anthony. The latter is at Paris where tranquility reigns for the moment, but where one is continually appalled by the traces of bloodshed and cruelty. . . .”

“JULY 6th: This morning I received a letter from Anthony. I am very happy he is in London again, away from that Volcano, Paris. . . .”

On October 13th of this revolutionary year she writes :

“Fresh disturbances in Germany. Count Latour killed by the mob and the Emperor once more abandoned his Capital. One has hardly time to mourn over the victims of popular fury before new acts of barbarity call forth one's horror and indignation at the butchers of new victims. But a few weeks ago Frankfort was the scene of bloodshed and murder, then Pesth displayed the red flag and now 'tis Vienna !

“Anthony is gone to Paris for a few days. Fortunately things look better there, but how long will that last ? . . .”

“JANUARY 29th, 1849: The news from Paris is not good ; a crisis is expected. May God avert another bloody collision. How happy I shall be when Anthony is back again. . . .”

I must also quote from the letters of a Miss Marion Ellice, one of her friends, who was in Paris at this time, and of whom Louisa speaks as “a

charming girl" and adds: "She is almost the only person out of my narrow circle that I ever felt inclined to make a friend of."

Miss Ellice was a niece of Mr. Edward ("Bear") Ellice, who had been Minister for War in Lord Grey's Cabinet (1830-1834), and was a well-known figure in English and French society. Miss Ellice herself constantly stayed with Princess Lieven, and was therefore able to send her friends very graphic accounts of all that was going on in France in the eventful years which saw Louis Napoleon's rise to power.

She writes to Lady de Rothschild in May 1848 :

"... People in Paris are full of *pros* and *cons* with regard to the modifications in the Law of Universal Suffrage, and opinions seem greatly divided as to their efficiency and use. I need not tell you with which party I coincide ! Suffice it to say, that I have not changed my mind in the slightest degree with regard to my *hero*¹ neither by reflection or fickleness ! !

"I hope I am not mistaken, but I do not fear any outbreak. The Burgraves will pass their law I should think, without much difficulty, and it will change nothing in the situation. As before the revolution of February, so after the defeat of Universal Suffrage, the divisions and jealousies of those in power, and the recklessness of the opposition, will break out in disorder, whether the people have or not the power of voting. The only difference will be, a little more mystery thrown over the danger, which makes it in my idea more dangerous.

¹ *Cavaignac*, Louis Eugene (1802-1857). Son of ardent republican who voted for death of Louis XVI. Professional soldier, with distinguished service in Algiers. Was Minister of War and Dictator in Paris during the insurrection of June, 1848, which he put down with much bloodshed. He stood for President of the New Republic, but was defeated by Louis Napoleon (afterwards Napoleon III), when he retired into opposition. At the *coup d'état* he was arrested, but after a short imprisonment at Ham was released and lived in retirement till death.

"What do you think of Napoleon Bonaparte? If the red party ever gain another victory I should not be surprised if that man played a part. He is very clever, though a *ruffian* and it would be a bad day for France if ever my *presentiment* were verified. The poor *president's* hopes are completely extinguished for the moment. His "*star*" is no longer visible and he is said to be resigned to stand or fall with the majority of the Assembly. The more *time passes*, the more one reflects how much wiser it would have been if all parties had honestly resolved to perform their duty to the very letter, to respect their oath, and sacrifice their private interests to the public good! As it is, they are forced by circumstances to make that sacrifice, and the only difference to them is, that they lose the dignity of acting from duty.

"We went to the President's ball last Thursday and saw him, and no great sight did we enjoy in the contemplation of that illustrious personage! The complete absence of life and expression is the most striking peculiarity of his countenance. He looks *mediocre*, honest, mistrustful (and no wonder!) and dogged. Aggy remarked great bumps of eventuality, individuality, and locality. There were some strange figures dancing. One lady had her hair all turned up from the roots, and a garland at the top of the edifice gave her a wild and *fantastic* appearance which was anything but pleasant to behold. Mme Demidoff looked very handsome and was beautifully dressed. Lord Normanby¹ was very gracious *bowing away* all the evening, and if smiles could please, he granted them with profusion—unfortunately in but *too* many cases they are thrown away and by the general account it is the case with him. We dine out every day and then go to one or two houses in the course of the evening. We cannot be accused of losing a moment of time and *not* enjoying ourselves to the very utmost. . . ."

In 1849 she writes :

" . . . We went to the Assembly and were much amused at making acquaintance with the *Mountain* and all the

¹ British Ambassador.

remarkable countenances of the day. Lord Aberdeen¹ is here and very much amused. He goes about everywhere and is struck by the extremely gentlemanly appearance of the representatives tho' *not* by their calm behaviour and common sense. Mr Guizot² is very happy to be back again and is much surrounded. People who never went near him formerly are now daily paying him visits and as he is no longer an object of envy (by being in power) I hear, to my surprise, his praise in mouths which never but abused him before. His daughters are much improved and their season in London has greatly *formed* their manners. They are clever and good girls whom I think you would like.

"We often go to Thiers.³ My Uncle is always pleased when he orders the coachman to drive to Place St. Georges and we also enjoy the evenings spent there. Nothing can be more fascinating and more *reasonable* than the conversation of the little man. What a pity that the past always leaves on one's mind an *arrière feeling* that he is dangerous.

"January 11th. I was interrupted the other day and yesterday I had so much to write home that I could not find a moment, dear Lady Rothschild, to finish my letter. I will make no more excuses but hope you will accept it as it is. Your husband was still in Paris when we dined with General Cavaignac and he had the pleasure of *teasing* us well all the evening. It did not pass the less pleasantly for that. All my expectations of *my hero* were surpassed and he pleased me much more than I expected he would. Aggy was quite as delighted with his looks as I was and we have both agreed, that he is by far the most interesting of all the notabilities we have seen here.

¹ Previously Foreign Secretary and subsequently Prime Minister. Leader of the Peelites.

² Fled to England at the outbreak of the Revolution: returned to France in 1849.

³ Famous minister under Louis Philippe and after the Franco-Prussian War. During the Republic and Second Empire he was in opposition. He was arrested at the *coup d'état* and escorted out of France, but allowed to return the following year.

"We went to the *President's* again yesterday with Lady Sandwich. Decidedly he seems to be a complete mediocrity. Yesterday however he looked pleased and talked to people. His reception was much more brilliant than last time. There were many more *personnes de la société* present. By dint of attention and observation we found out something to admire in L.N. He has a beautiful little foot!! Sir William Molesworth, *yclept* the English Montagnard, was there and a pretty figure to behold, with his long, straight hair and his *peculiar* affectation. Lord Normanby complained bitterly of the numbers of English he had to present. In truth the sight of his constant bowing does make one's back ache sadly. . . ."

Another letter is dated 17th October, 1850.

" . . . We saw the hero of the day, General Changarnier,¹ for a moment, at Princess Crassalkovitche's. They were talking of the review and saying that there was no enthusiasm for the President, but that those soldiers who shouted did so by their officers' orders. Mr Thiers was there too, looking much better in health and, what is more, *feeling* so. As far as we have been able to remark, everyone high and low seems to think that a prolongation of power to the President is the most reasonable course that can be adopted. No one seems to care *a fig* about him, but they want peace and order, he is there, and they will think it more prudent to have him. His very *moderate* personal recommendations frighten none of the parties or personages who hope to come in later—in fact I think *qu'il y a tout à parier pour lui*—at least as far as one can see at this moment. Only fancy my good luck! One of the very first persons I met with here was my hero Cavaignac! And I am happy to say he

¹ *Changarnier*, Nicolas Anne Theodule (1793–1877). Professional soldier with distinguished record. Commanded National Guard of Paris in 1848. "An avowed enemy of republican institutions, he held a unique position in upholding the power of the President," but opposed Louis Napoleon, was deprived of his command and was arrested at the *coup d'état*.

looks much better, and I am *très rassurée sur sa santé*. However you do not appreciate him and therefore are not worthy to hear anything about him. I also saw Lord Brougham on his way thro' Paris to Cannes. He had just come from Brussels. . . ."

I give a further extract from a letter written some time in 1851.

"My favourite General Cavaignac has been excepted from the measures of rigour adopted towards the others ; except at the first moment his well known honesty prevents anyone from suspecting that he would plot and plan against a Government that the whole nation has chosen. I am still very proud of having done justice to him and admired him when everyone else belied him ; and you have no idea how, *now* that he no longer inspires jealousy, everyone is ready to point out his merits and join with me ! Such is the way of the world ! His bride is a very nice and amiable young person and devotedly attached to him—in fact I have every hope that *my favourite* will be perfectly *dédommagé* by domestic happiness for his political failures, and, really, I can't pity him for having made the exchange !

"I suppose you are quite disgusted and horrified like most people in England, at all that has happened here—whereas I think it is the best thing that could have happened and that nothing else would have saved this country from inevitable ruin. I dare not say this in the Rue Laffitte now as you may well suppose although I used to say it openly enough before the Coup d'Etat and when they were not in distress about their friend. You have no idea of the confusion there was in their minds and the way in which the different parties were struggling for power in the Assembly. They would have pulled asunder just as they did on the 24th of February and the whole country would have fallen once more into the mud with nobody to help them out of it ! It is therefore no wonder that the whole country (with the exception of the defeated parties) is so pleased with what has happened !

"It is all well and good talking of respect to the Constitution in England, but here! The Constitution was the work of a lot of rabble, arranged on purpose as a *trap* to ensure the victory of that rabble in '52! The *Country* protested against it from the first moment; when *Paris* bowed to the yoke—the *Country* stood out against Ledru Rollin¹ and his commissaires extraordinaires, and the Gouvernement Provisoire fell under their reprobation. My friend Cavaignac (alas!) was not elected because he was for that Constitution which they abhorred, and for the Republic.

"They gave six millions to Louis Napoleon to get rid of the Constitution, and now they have given him seven and a half millions because he *has* got rid of it! All that is as clear and as logical as possible and the way in which he appeals to the whole of France and keeps a check on Paris, may perhaps end by founding a much better order of things in this country than has existed for many a day.

"The other evening at the Opera he was very well received and the sight was extremely curious, the number of uniforms present and the etiquette instinctively observed by the whole audience, offering a subject for reflections one never dreamed of meeting with in this country!

"At the dinner at the Tuileries, the 450 Mayors nearly stifled him in their eagerness to show their loyalty, and if the ministers had not interfered and made them *défiler* one by one, they might very well have pulled him to pieces!

"Pourquoi le Président ne peut-il plus se chauffer?

"Parcequ'il a donné *le soufflet* à l'Assemblée, l'appel (la pelle) au peuple, le *garde cendres* au Roi Jérôme, et *le feu* à l'armée.

¹ Violent radical, leader of the working classes from about 1846 to 1849, when he forfeited the confidence of the Extremists by siding with Lamartine and the party of order. At the presidential election he stood as the socialist candidate and after his defeat tried to impeach the President and his members. He failed and escaped to London, where he joined the executive of the revolutionary committee of Europe with Kossuth and Mazzini, etc.

"Then they say that instead of 'Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité,' three other words are to be stuck up: 'Infanterie, Cavalerie, Artillerie.'

"But good bye, dear Louisa, you must have had enough of my scrawl by this. . . ."

A little later she writes :

"... General Changarnier and Princess Lieven¹ were to dine at Rue Lafitte together when I last heard, and so I suppose they are becoming great friends at last. They say that the President *dares* not get rid of General Changarnier and that the latter is for preventing a coup d'état and keeping the Constitution as it is at present, in the hopes of upsetting the whole system within two years' time. I also hear that the reconciliation of the two Branches is certain—that the enlightened part of the Orleanists, Mr Guizot at their head, are for it and that this union gives great strength to the Monarchist party, which is six to one in the Assembly and might get entirely rid of the Mountain if they only had sufficient energy. The spirit is bad 'dans le midi.' . . .

"What does D'izzy say of all that is being brought forward?" [she asks in 1854] "in Parliament? I am inclined, I own, to fear that our Government has not played a very straight-forward part in all this affair but would willingly have given in to Russia abroad, if they could only have blinded John Bull at home! . . . But the sturdy fellow refused to be half dupe and half villain and has nobly proved to the world that he loves fair play better than *self-interest*!

"... My brother writes us from Munich, that they are *mad* with powerless rage and fright in Bavaria. Extolling the Emperor Nicolas to the skies and sending us to the *other end* of the scale of good and evil, into the black region I dare not name!! We are accused of falseness and perfidy and I know not what besides! I am afraid that our want of foresight and firmness at first justifies,

¹ Wife to the Russian Ambassador in London. After his death she returned to Paris and her salon became the resort of diplomats, politicians and men of the world. She died in 1857.

in a measure, a feeling of disappointment with regard to us. The Czar must have fancied he would have us all his own way and that John Bull had neither sense or spirit left in him. Egregiously does he find himself mistaken! I dare say, he would give anything *now* to be able to get out of the scrape, but it is too late! Poor Princess Lieven writes very sadly from Brussels. It is hard at her age to have to leave her home and her habits for a cause she cannot be very proud of, at the bottom of her heart!"

Miss Ellice writes in 1856:

"... Your friend Mr *d'Izzy* has lowered himself greatly, I am sorry to say, by uniting with the Peelites, radicals, and peace party, merely to do mischief and interfere with a Government he has not the means of replacing, but by becoming so factious, the opposition has just served to rally all reasonable men round the present administration, and so far have done them good service.

"And Lord John!! What do you say to him? His friends put all his misdemeanours on his wife's shoulders. Poor wives! They are often made scapegoats, some when they do not deserve it. According to my Uncle the Crimea conferences will not have proved fruitless after all, there being hopes of an addition to what he calls Lord John's 'rabbit warren.' Whenever that is the case, it flies to *his* head and his friends can make nothing out of him. We hear from Paris that Mr de Morny¹ is to marry Lord C——'s second daughter² the moment he can break thro' the rather worm-eaten tie of Mme Lehon. He had better do like Colonel Henry, who being puzzled how to announce his marriage to Mme de Coutades and having called when she was out, left his card with 'Je me marie' upon it. She sent back hers with 'Je vous plains.' However she was greatly distressed and troubled at it, and appealed to the Emperor who alas! found a means of consoling her by allowing her a pension

¹ Half-brother to Louis Napoleon and an important financier and somewhat of a roué.

² Soon after this letter was written he married Princess Sophie Troubetzkoi.

of 12,000 francs with which, unlike Dido, she smothered her grief.

"They say the Queen is delighted with the thoughts of her visit to Paris. I only hope she will enjoy it altho' the moment is not very propitious. There has been and still must be so much bloodshed and grief. You knew the poor Rogers did you not? Their misery is truly heartrending, and so many others who are likewise to be pitied! The letters we have received and seen from the Crimea say that on that *dreadful* 18th of June it is only a wonder that anyone escaped alive, the grape was so overpowering, and what made our failure more bitter was that there was more mismanagement than misfortune.

"My Uncle has spent a pleasant winter at Nice with Lady Ashburton, Lady Ely and Lady Dufferin. They ended, after much coquetting and holding back on both sides by getting into communication with the Russians—who are only half disposed to make friends with us because we still have Lord Palmerston, whom they hate more than ever. They can't forgive his keeping our fleet in the Black Sea to *compel obedience*. In short, his behaving as wisely and firmly as he has done has drawn down upon him their heaviest displeasure. Sir Robert Peel's speech made a shocking effect and was the least expected, as especial attention and courtesy had been shown to his wife at Moscow.

"My brother writes that those high in place, were greatly consternated by the Archbishop's death and feel that nothing is safe or nothing held sacred in France. The *Figaro* Newspaper called Verger's knife 'le couteau de la precision'."

She gives one or two lively descriptions of the visit paid by Queen Victoria in August, 1855.

"Cliffehall, 4th September.

"DEAR LADY ROTHSCHILD,

"... We have had numbers of private letters from Paris, all agreeing that the newspapers, generally so full of exaggerations, are this time rather below the truth than

otherwise. There was one universal feeling of satisfaction from the highest to the lowest throughout France.

"Of course, I except the disappointed and discontented parties, who were all the more bitter for the *completeness* of the Queen's success. At first, many people regretted (as I did) that the visit should take place while war and bloodshed were filling so many hearts with sorrow, but when the conviction got abroad that many intrigues were going on against the Emperor and the Alliance, both in France and other countries, opinion changed; and a higher and more useful interpretation was given to the great event—'A mon avis, comme à celui de beaucoup de juges calmes et réfléchis, cette reciprocité de visites entre nos souverains a une grande portée politique et aura du rétentissement dans le monde entier. Les fêtes en ont été le magnifique costume, mais sous cet éclat et cette pompe il faut voir quelque chose de mieux encore—il faut l'espérer, de grands bienfaits pour l'humanité.' I quote the writer's own words because I think they express the general feeling.

"There was great disappointment the day of the Queen's arrival when by some inexplicable miscalculation she kept the assembled million waiting two hours, till it became so dark they could not see her at all. Well, some of our friends who went about amongst the crowd saw evident fatigue and impatience, but not *one single* sign of ill humour. 'Chacun sentait bien qu'il y avait là bien autre chose qu'un simple cortège.' In short they are all most heartily with the Emperor and for the alliance and they joined with all their might in doing honour to his Royal guests.

"What he understands so admirably is how to associate the whole nation in all he does and make the smallest feel *he* has *his* small share in the advantages, responsibilities and general fate of his country.

"The numbers of people who flocked up from the provinces was wonderful and the Queen must at length have been able to form a true idea of the working of *universal suffrage* which is so absurdly misconstrued here.

"Our former governess had a ticket for the *débarcadère* to see her arrive and she 'was sorry to inform us' that

she had on an abominable white bonnet with big white feathers of the most ungraceful description, and that she saw her in the same bonnet two days after ! That piece of criticism is the only one we have heard. Du reste, nothing but praise.

“ How fortunate that the Empress should have been unable to accompany the Queen everywhere—she is so beautiful and graceful !

“ Princess Lieven says, but if you will be *very descreet indeed* and not betray me, I will copy for you her very words, for I think her impartiality, as an *enemy*, does her great honour : ‘ La visite de la Reine a été une perfection de tout point sauf le retard du premier jour—Pour tout le reste, curiosité, bienviellance dans le public, bonne réception partout, fêtes magnifiques, tenu superbe, bonne humeur en haut, en bas—la Reine ravie, émerveillée, enchantée de son hôte, témoignant son plaisir de tout—On l’a trouvée parfaitement gracieuse, digne, toujours reine, toujours droite, toujours charmante—voilà la vérité vraie, car c’est tout le monde qui le redit. Le Prince Albert beau et raide, moins avenant qu’elle—la Princesse Royale, pas jolie, mais spirituelle en train extrêmement agréable—le Prince de Galles, très gentil et avec un air de ce qu’il sera un jour. L’Empereur n’a pas quitté la Reine d’un instant, galant, empressé, l’amusant, l’interessant et lui plaisant superlativement—La plus grande intimité avec l’Impératrice, celui décidément grosse. Belle comme le jour à la magnifique fête de Versailles—on dit que tout était féérique—Je n’ai rien vu—rien pu rever ou penser . . . Votre Reine a plu à tout le monde et toute cette affaire a été admirable. Paris pavoisé et en gala jusqu’à la fin.’

“ I wonder if the Queen was as enchanted as she really had reason to be, and Prince Albert ? His is such a false position that one does not feel much astonished at his being stiff, and rather pompous and sour, which he is (so people say). I had rather be a shoeblack ! . . .”

She again refers to this visit in her next letter :

“ . . . We have had more accounts of the visit—all more or less saying the same thing, ‘ Fairyland.’ The Empress

was approved by everybody for her perfect tact, which is saying a great deal. The Queen's presents were so handsome that every one was surprised, as people know that she is not *naturally* very generous. The adieux at Boulogne were most touching and, upon the whole, that last act of the grand performance was the most imposing of all. The Princess Royal cried all the way from St. Cloud to Boulogne at sorrow of going away, but the Prince of Wales who was a great deal with the Emperor is said to have 'wished he was his son, so great was the kindness he met with.' He looks a delicate boy, but intelligent and nice mannered, having inherited his Mother's tact, which struck everybody. . . ."

CHAPTER IV

1848-1854

Religion and Education—the Children—Aston Clinton

RELIGION and education evidently interested Lady de Rothschild beyond any other subjects. This is curious. Her mother, from her letters and from what I have heard, appears to have been more interested in the affairs of the material world than in those of the spiritual ; yet both Louisa and her sister, Charlotte, pondered deeply on these questions, and this is especially noticeable after the birth of the children. Every page of the journals indicates Louisa's serious views on life. She had not been brought up to very strict observances, and she writes :

" . . . This morning I tried to give the children a little lesson in religion, but I found it very difficult to make it interesting to them. We have no books quite fitted for that purpose, all the *Jewish Manuals* are bad in my opinion, being written in too concise a manner with too many long, fine words and here and there a slight colouring of superstition. Constance has been more attentive the last week. . . .

" I am reading Nash on *The Union of Church and State*, and I agree with him so much that I should like now to read a good reply by some clever churchman. The greatest evil of the *union*, I think, is that it prevents *reformation* and thus perpetuates error or gives rise to sects, for creeds formed by man, like the Anglican Church,

require *change* to meet the changed opinions of the world just as much as any other system. And so, though in a minor degree, it is with Judaism. The laws of the Talmud—good perhaps when they were framed—are now useless, and therefore ought to be considered obsolete and be erased from our creed. . . .

She defends the Old Testament :

" . . . Read Moor's *Soul and Body* and Martineau's *Bible and the Child*. Much *displeased* with the latter. The Author disparages the Old Testament and says the New alone should be taught to children. Is the love of God an evil doctrine, then? Ought they not to honour their parents ; to help the poor and to act kindly to all? Yet these are the tenets of the Old Testament which he would studiously keep from the hands and hearts of children.

" . . . The moral law given by Moses was certainly implanted in the heart of man, but obscured by passion and human frailness, it required the Divine Hand to make it universally received. We all recognise it now, but how difficult it is to follow it !

" The Fast pretty well spent. Read Channing and *The Pariah* besides the Bible and Prayers, and in the afternoon went to the synagogue. Perhaps if I understood Hebrew I should find the service more beneficial, but in my present state of ignorance, the noise, senseless to me, only confuses me and prevents my paying attention either to the prayers or to my thoughts. My children, please God, shall be better instructed and able to join their bretheren in public worship. . . ."

" . . . Yesterday dined at Charlotte's and went to the play. Saw 'Gold', in which a *good Jew appears*. It speaks ill for the general estimation in which we are held, I think, to bring forward a *good Jew* as a *phenomenon*. No one would dream of introducing in a play a *good Catholic*, or a *good Mahomedan* even ; it is thus a proof that prejudice still exists—or at least our name is still, be it just or not, 'a byword and a reproach.' . . ."

Year by year she mentions the Fast and

Passover, as does her daughter. In 1849 we find her writing :

" SEPTEMBER 29th : . . . Spent the Fast pretty well, but made many good resolutions, some of which—for instance, of patience with the children—I have, alas, already broken. And yet, I am fully aware of the effects of example and know that all my preaching will be useless if I am passionate before them."

The services, however, do not satisfy her :

" THURSDAY, APRIL 13th, 1854 : Another Passover . . . What a pity that our Service is not of that impressive, solemn kind that would chain the attention of all those who assist at it and leave some good thoughts with its hearers. It might be beautiful, whereas it is not only tedious but often ridiculous, and in order to keep up any devotional feeling I am often compelled not to follow the English translation but to give quite a different meaning to the Hebrew. Is it not, however, a profanation of sacred things to read prayers which one feels to be absurd ? We are indeed in much need of reform. . . ."

At this date it was most unusual for Jewesses to study the New Testament, and her remarks on St. Mark's and St. Luke's Gospels are therefore all the more striking :

" TUESDAY, JUNE 22nd, 1852 : . . . Read *Mark's Gospel*. Struck by two things in it—Christ's prophecy of his return in glory during the life-time of those he was addressing—which was palpably false—and the account of his burial. He was taken down from the Cross on Friday evening by Joseph of Arimathea, one of his followers, and it was only on Sunday morning that search was made for his body. Surely, life might not have been extinct and his friends might have favoured his escape. There is a sublime morality, however, in his doctrine which it is difficult to ascribe to an impostor, and such he must be called if, reappearing to his disciples, he told them he had risen from death ! "

"SATURDAY, JULY 3rd, 1852 : . . . I have read Luke's Gospel—It is longer, more elaborate, than Mark's, but struck by the same account of Christ's prophecy of his glorious return, and of his burial. In neither of those two Gospels does there appear to me the doctrine of the Trinity or the divinity of Christ.

Both she and her sister had been greatly interested in the education of the poor, having started a village school at their mother's home at Worth before they married, and we see from her remarks on a book she was reading the broad-minded manner in which she considered education.

" . . . Richter disapproves of *education* for the poorer classes. I think he is quite right in saying that reading and writing may be dangerous acquisitions to them ; reading and writing alone might very probably become such ; and consequently it is a *false idea* to think they are sufficient. They are either too much, or not half enough. If you teach the poor to read, you must give them sufficient knowledge to make useful books interesting, sufficient moral and religious instruction to make *good* books welcome to them. . . ."

After her sister's death in 1854, she resolves to devote

" more time and thought to her children and the poor at Aston Clinton and Halton must now claim my care and our own poor Jewish brethren. It was Charlotte's greatest wish to improve their moral and intellectual condition, I must both for her sake and theirs try to follow in her wake and do all I can to raise them.

" I have begun writing sermons upon the texts of my little book for the adult School, and must pray for God's blessing upon the work. May He give me the power to write something that may be of use and the *will* to overcome little difficulties in the pursuit of what I feel to be right. Much pleased with some of the Quakers' doctrines. . . ."

With the help of Mrs. Harris and her daughters, she instituted classes in the City for the East End Jews, and wrote sermons and stories for the girls and women.

As we follow the journals between the years 1847 and 1854, we find that on the education of her children also her thoughts were advanced in many ways—in her wish, for instance, that her children should develop along their own lines :

“... How different the two sisters are. How will they grow up? How will their present dispositions ripen and expand? I must try to lead them right and yet to leave them their individuality. There is a great charm in strong individuality. People are too anxious, I think to resemble each other. . . .”

Louisa, however, evidently disagreed with the notion that women should take a prominent part in public affairs :

“... Read Sidney Smith's Essay on Female Education. It is witty, clever and forcible like all he wrote, but was no doubt more applicable to 1808 *than it is to* 1848, for women receive a more *liberal* education now than they then did. I mean by 'liberal' one comprising a greater variety of knowledge. Much time is, however, still wasted, I think, upon accomplishments, for when there is no natural talent, great, continual application to music and drawing is a waste of time. One accomplishment, however, I consider almost requisite for a lady to possess, as she cannot read and write all day long, and painting or playing becomes a delightful recreation, and it is rare that one has no talent or, at least taste for either. . . .”

“... I think it is far better for women to occupy themselves more exclusively with their own family and for men to go and work abroad, but quaker ladies have more free time to devote to the poor and the needy without infringing upon their home duties than we have, for no

devoirs de société engross their thoughts and hours as they do ours. . . .”

Her mother-in-law expresses the current point of view on these matters when she writes in a letter to Louisa :

“ . . . Our family circle is pretty numerous—the gentlemen live more in the world than we are allowed to do. We must not grumble at this, for what conduces to the improvement of commerce, the Arts, Sciences, and other benefits, emanates from their industry. . . .”

Louisa again writes :

“ . . . I cannot think the system of competition good, at least, for little girls—what evil feelings of envy, pride or discontent may it not give rise to—feelings which may do more harm to the woman than a little extra quickness may do her good. For boys it is different. . . .”

Yet, when eventually her daughters gave up so much of their lives to public work she was most sympathetic, and in later life was proud of Constance’s achievements as a public speaker.

The children were strictly watched over, and their little faults were a subject of anxious cogitation to their young mother. We smile as we read of Constance, aged four :

“ How much fonder she is of dissipation and dress than I was as a child ; I must not encourage these tastes too much. . . .”

“ . . . Constance has been rather self willed and pettish the last few days. She tries to play the tyrant with Annie. How fortunate it is she has a sister and one who does not always give way, for without such a check she would have become very selfish. . . .”

While her daughter is still at this very early age she writes :

“ Constance has got a dancing master—a very good

one—and a writing master. My temper was not good enough to teach her. . . .”

and again :

“ . . . I am sorry to say that I have been very impatient lately with Constance at her writing lessons, she has not been very attentive and her mistakes and repeatedly ill shapen letters irritate and vex me. How happy I shall be when she has a master again, for certainly my temper is not good enough to give writing lessons. In other respects I have no reason to be dissatisfied with her. She is generally docile and very good with Mrs Beardsly and Johanna. Annie gets on extremely well, likewise with her reading and speaking. . . .”

“ . . . In the evening took the children to Charlotte’s juvenile party. Constance and Annie looked very well, and enjoyed themselves far more than I ever did at their age. They were not the least shy and full of spirits. Once or twice a year is, I think, as much as children ought to go out to *real* parties ; the excitement, if they are amused, cannot be good for them—and, if bored, discontent, envy and other unamiable feelings are brought into play. . . .”

When Constance was six years old her mother writes :

“ APRIL 30th : . . . Sunday was Constance’s birthday. Heigh-ho, how time flies—she is six years old—the happy age of infancy is over and she must begin the *labour* of life. However, I must try and be patient with her and make her lessons as amusing as I can. . . .”

In 1853 a new era in all their lives began, for at last they settled in a country house, Aston Clinton, in Buckinghamshire. At first it was quite small, but Sir Anthony gradually enlarged it, furnishing it in the French style, with his unerring taste. On Sunday, May 15th, Lady de Rothschild writes :

“ . . . Last Saturday week we had a most Providential



ASTON CLINTON

escape. We were at Aston Clinton, our first visit, when a fire broke out in the night, which had it been discerned at a later hour, might have been extremely serious. . . . Notwithstanding the unpleasant episode of the fire I was rather pleased with Aston Clinton, the house is too small to be very comfortable, but the country about seemed to me prettier than it had hitherto done and the air and quiet around did me good, for I went down far from well and returned, spite of the fire, much better. . . .”

“ . . . Yesterday went to Aston Clinton with Mama and the children. The place looked pretty enough to make me like it, but as yet I have not sufficient interests round about it, I do not know the cottagers and there is no one to seem even pleased at our approach ; I feel in the midst of strangers and, with my constitutional shyness, it will take me some time to become at home there. I have no doubt that I shall however, be able to do a little good there. There is no girls’ school—perhaps I might commence one. . . .”

“ Spent two happy days at Aston Clinton, running about with the children and making acquaintances in the village. The country was delightful, so quiet, fresh and green, but alas, how much misery and sorrow exist in those tranquil shades and daisied meadows where all looks so bright and peaceful . . .”

“ . . . Mr Osborne said the other day there was no greater evil in the country than a *Lady Bountiful* ; there may be some truth in that remark—let me not be carried away therefore by the indolent luxury of giving, but try and do real good at our little Aston Clinton. . . .”

“ TUESDAY, AUGUST 23rd, 1853. Aston Clinton.

“ Yes, here we really are—the season is over and we are quietly established in our own little country house—a ten years’ dream is realised and am I happy at its realisation ? But was a dream ever realised ? Never ; the substance may be there, but the poetry, the romance, the perfection which at once makes it beautiful and impossible, must be wanting in the reality—Aston Clinton is not *the* country house that I dreamt of—and, were it all that it is not, I am far too much engrossed

with Connie to be deeply interested in house or grounds, too anxious about her progress to be delighted or depressed by any place of residence. The tranquillity of the country is pleasant however to me and I feel that in time I may grow attached to this little place which I thought, at first sight, the ugliest on earth. Green fields alone have a wonderful charm for me, and in the delight of my children I feel a very pure and grateful joy. . . .”

“WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12th: . . . When last I wrote in this journal we had just arrived at Aston Clinton; now we have spent six weeks here and I am getting quite attached to the little place. If only I could see a little more of Charlotte” [her sister], “if we could visit and talk and drive together, these lanes and villages would be much dearer to me. . . .”

From this somewhat inauspicious beginning Aston Clinton became the beloved abode of the whole family. Sir Anthony showered kindness and friendliness on his country neighbours, rich and poor, and Lady de Rothschild and her children were known and beloved in every cottage. In her extreme old age she still would go round in her brougham, visiting and taking jellies to any invalid, of whom she would always have a report from the village nurse; and she was a constant visitor at the school which she and her husband had founded.

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CHAPTER V

1858-1859

The Children's journals

AFTER 1854 there is a gap of thirteen years in Lady de Rothschild's journals, and the thread of the narrative is taken up in 1858 by the journals of Constance (aged 15) and Annie (just 13). I have reproduced these without any attempt to correct punctuation, grammar or spelling.

Both children inherited the *bonhomie* and *joie de vivre* of their father which were wanting in their mother, while from her came their devotion to duty and their interest in religion and philanthropy. An unusual combination of high spirits, religious emotion and interest in their lessons and in their fellow-creatures, rich and poor, must have had deep roots in their natures, as it endured throughout their lives. Lady de Rothschild speaks of their exuberance :

"The children this morning declared they were so happy they did not know how to contain their joy !"

To her daughters, in spite of a slight irritation occasionally shown towards their mother, which makes their childish journals all the more human, she was the embodiment of all that was most admirable, while an almost unique affection grew up between the trio of mother and daughters. Years later Constance writes :

"My Mother and my sister have been my friends.

They are miles above everyone I know. To them is given my love, my admiration, my confidence, my whole self. . . . My Mother only really and truly cares for her two daughters, my sister has only *one* or *two* friends in the world and my Husband declares that I only care for my Mother."

Thus it is almost amusing to find traces of rebellion against her anxious *régime*.

The journals bear so many references to cousins and aunts that a slight account of the respective families may be of use.

Baron Lionel's children lived at 148, Piccadilly and at Gunnersbury. They consisted of : Leonora ("Laurie"), who had married her French cousin, Alphonse de Rothschild in 1857; Evelina ("Evy"), who in 1865 married her cousin, Ferdinand, and died the following year in her first confinement; Nathaniel ("Natty"), who was created first Lord Rothschild in 1885; Alfred ("Alfy"), and Leopold ("Leo").

Of the seven Gunthersburg cousins, Constance and Annie's chief friends were the four eldest girls: Adèle ("Addy"), Emma ("Emmy"), who married Lord Rothschild in 1867; Clementine ("Clemmy"), and Thérèse ("Thésie").

Sir Anthony's youngest brother, Mayer Amschel de Rothschild and his wife, Juliana, lived at Mentmore. She was a clever, talkative woman. According to Annie's description she was somewhat opinionated :

" . . . Whenever Juliana speaks, whatever she may say it is always a positive idea—— Of course, it is so positive, everything she says, that when she asks a question it seems ridiculous, so accustomed am I to hear her assert, and with such self-confidence. . . ."

Constance, too, moralizing a little primly on the

conversation, gives us a glimpse of her voluble and kindly aunt :

“ . . . At one a carriage arrived, it was Juliana, Louisa and Hannah. The former was as usual in a very talkative mood and instantly began talking laughing and relating how she had amused herself at Woburn. At lunch I cannot say that I listened much to all that Juliana was relating. . . . After we all walked to Halton. . . . Juliana walked very slowly and talked away all the time. She spoke a great deal of Rose and told me that last year she was really very much attached to a young man of the name of Calthorpe. It seems very sad that a girl so beautiful and so universally admired as Rose is should be left mourning for a lover who really was in love with her and whose character is now branded by the name of flirt. I cannot think how anyone is disposed to envy a belle of the Season, admired, flattered, encouraged to flirt. They remain for two or three years the ornament of the drawing-rooms, some fortunately are married but others drag on a wearied existence and are devoted votaries of fashion. To them admiration is as necessary as food, they thrive upon it but when it is withheld they droop and fade and at last become an example to the moralist who wishing to show everything is vanity says : ‘ See how beauty fades ’ and perhaps will give the once brilliant belle as an example. Yes, I repeat it is sad to think that eyes which have that fire and which by their speaking eloquence have drawn many to them, should ever quench, that lips of a coral red should become shrivelled and white and that the soft tresses that adorn the head of youth should give place to the silvery hair of age.”

Hannah, Mayer Amschel's only child, and later Lady Rosebery, was a few years younger than Annie. The girls used often to visit their little cousin at Mentmore, which was only a few miles away from Aston Clinton and where they were much more lavishly entertained than in their own more simple home.

"Ferdie" was one of the Austrian cousins, who eventually became owner of Waddesdon, a magnificent country house, also in Buckinghamshire.

The cousins were constantly exchanging visits, and we read of many lively times spent in the company of one or other of the families.

Constance's journal, written when she was fifteen, shows her as rather self-conscious and occasionally inclined to be a little sententious, though extremely enthusiastic. She begins in somewhat the same strain as did her mother in 1847 :

"This journal I begin with the resolution to try and write in it nearly every day, or at least as often as I am able. I hope that when I have come to the end of this book I shall be able to say that I am improved.

"This is not to be a mere journal of what occurs every day, but it is to contain most of my thoughts and some of my reflections."

Annie's journal, extending over only a few months, written at the age of barely thirteen, is so lively and spontaneous that we can but regret that more of it has not reached us. She begins, regardless of punctuation :

"DECEMBER 14TH, 1858 : At twelve o'clock the photographe man came and we dressed in amazone Mademoiselle was in a great passion because hers was not beautiful I thought it very like. I remarked how red and white she became when she said we should not have it. Then Grand-mamma—— Hers did not succeed, once or twice—the third time it was excellent not flattered but excellent—The man was not polite. He said 'It is very well you know for an aged lady stooping rather.' Grand-mamma laughed angrily and looking nearer said that it was an ugly picture and in a real passion took it from the man and wiped it out completely ! I was very cross—then sat, and not particular like the others so

was not expecting to see myself a beauty on paper, found my likeness very good."

Annie does not always seem so indifferent to her appearance, as we find her writing a week or two later :

" . . . We looked at the people coming and going into the drawingroom. After tea we dressed—— Connie was very cross indeed that she had only her old black silk to put on. I did not care so much strange to say, for it is generally I who cares the most about that sort of thing. I have a strange dislike to being remarked either from an excess of plainness or smartness. It probably arises from a little vanity which I will try to overcome."

Conny, in her journal, corroborates this remark, saying, of another occasion :

" We wore our thin green dresses, our grey cloaks and our white bonnets. Annie at first would not put on the grey cloak because she did not think them smart enough, I am afraid that she is rather vain. I do not think so because of the affair of the cloaks, but many little things give me this idea."

As might be expected, the children had various teachers. The one who had the most influence over them was Dr. Kalisch, affectionately called either " the little Doctor " or " the Cat." He was a fine Hebrew scholar who had fled as a young student from Germany. He was tutor to the sons of Baron Lionel de Rothschild at Gunnersbury, and instructed Lady de Rothschild's children in Hebrew, philosophy and other subjects.

The children seem to have consulted him about most things, even later on about their love affairs. He used to go down to Aston Clinton, and we get glimpses of his effect on them :

" . . . After dinner we had a music lesson with Mrs

Chappell and then the little Cat appeared. Our lesson with him was very pleasant as it always is. . . ."

"I wrote until the little Cat came who looked as usual very merry. I thought him extremely talkative during our Hebrew lesson.

"After lunch we played at bagatelle, although the weather was horrid the little Cat insisted upon taking a walk. He returned at half past three when we began our German lesson. We wrote chronology for a long time for Dr Kalisch explained to us the different schools of philosophers. . . ."

"At three o'clock Annie and I wrote Hebrew, the former has really improved perceptibly. I think that she is Doctor Kalisch's great pride. . . ."

"Dr. Kalisch's two rules ¹ :

"(1) To generalize our conversations to lead others with us away from mere worldly concerns.

"(2) Examples are better than abstract reflections."

"... At a quarter before eleven Doctor Kalisch made his appearance ; I had resolved on a very long walk and I was disappointed when I heard that Doctor Kalisch was going by the early train and that this was to happen every time. He was rather cross during our Hebrew lesson and seemed astonished at all our little mistakes. We ate our dinner almost as quickly as at the Gunthersburg and then walked very quickly to Halton. I was in a bad humour all the time and so that nobody should perceive it, I walked slowly behind picking forget-me-nots and at last succeeded in throwing my ill humour into the canal so that I was quite merry and lively on my walk home."

Annie writes :

"It is extraordinary how the little Doctor teaches, how he tells you a world of knowledge with every date ; our compositions were good, mine particularly so, three lines perfect. . . . Mamma, extraordinary to say, had no charges against me, excepting the old one of bad manners, which I always say Mamma speaks at random. . . ."

¹Sixteen of her relations are classified according to the first rule.

Dr. Kalisch appears to have been a cheerful as well as an inspiring teacher.

"... Natty informed us that Doctor Kalisch was at home so we three set out in the dark, well cloaked and bonnetted to see him. We found him in his funny little low room in his dressing-gown. We all went in and Evy and Natty began to talk the most absurd nonsense really of too little worth to be written down. . . ."

"... We all congregated in my bedroom and arranged a charade for the evening. Doctor Kalisch was to play the part of an old woman, but the poor little man had such a dreadful head-ache that he could not even appear in the evening."

And little Annie tells how :

"After dinner, not frightened by the sprinkling drops, go to Bucklands. The little Doctor remarkably chatty ; have a race with him, 'Shame to me he wins. All my boots fault.' Mrs Fowler gives us very good wine ; return have another race. Alas he won. Then we had a jumping match over a ditch. At last very merry we came home. . . ."

Besides Dr. Kalisch, there were Mr. Jeremy, their teacher of mathematics, Mr. Shepperson, the drawing-master (a good artist), Mrs. Chappell, and later Mr. Pauer, the well-known pianist, who taught them music, while a series of "Mademoiselles" flits across their pages.

Constance is thrilled by the romance of one of these :

"OCTOBER 30th, 1858: I was just in bed when I heard the rumbling of carriage wheels, Annie and I sprang out of bed and stood shivering in the passage. Mlle, yes, Mlle ascended the stairs in deep mourning. She came and sat down by the fire, her mother had died before she had arrived, it was enough for me, I buried my face in the pillow and cried."

"NOVEMBER 20th: I went into Mlle's room in the

morning before she was dressed. She appeared very much agitated and at last told me that she had something very particular to tell Mamma but that she could not summon resolution enough to say it. I told her that she had much better make up her mind and tell Mamma at once. After prayers we went out but before we left the house I begged of Mamma to go into the schoolroom and ask Mlle what she had to say. Meantime we paid the Browns a visit. They appeared delighted to see us particularly Miss Wells who was very much rouged. We returned home at two. I rushed into the schoolroom and found Mlle with red eyes and an excited air. She kissed me and drawing me rapidly upstairs she told me, It is all done. Your Mamma has promised I am to be married next month and your Mamma will give me a rente of thirty pounds. After dinner she told me that she had been quite hysterical with Mamma, that she had laughed and cried together until at last Mamma had begged of her to speak, and when once she had commenced it was easy enough to continue and she told Mamma everything, all about Mr Goldberg and her mysterious journey to Italy how she rushed in the night over the Mont Cenis, how she arrived half dead at Padua and to her consternation Mr Goldberg was not there. At last she went to his sister's house who entertained her and told her that Mr Goldberg was still in Milan and then she that same evening went full speed to Milan. And in ten days she had gone and returned. How much one can do for love, I believe I could do as much, I am sure when love is in the case you are stronger hearted than you usually are. I could not help feeling melancholy when she spoke of her approaching marriage, for then she will be at Paris, far away from us."

"NOVEMBER 26th: Mademoiselle came in radiant with delight, Monsieur Goldberg had written to say that she could be married to-morrow if she wished it. I went to bed thinking of her and wondering whether I should ever be in the same happy position.

Mademoiselle seems to have constituted the



SIR ANTHONY DE ROTHSCILD

chief topic of conversation at this time. There are talks with the relations about her presents, and her pension. On December 17th Annie writes :

"... At 11 o'clock came the Jim and the Chap and we geometrified for an hour after which we duetified. At dinner, the dear Jim and Mrs Chapell had a long consultation the subject as usual Mademoiselle's wedding. . . ."

Annie mentions the game of bagatelle :

"... I as usual win—Connie does not play at all and Doretta,¹ not much better, I feel my superiority and show it I am afraid. . . . I hope it is not wrong! No it cannot be wrong! to like a little amusement. There are very few girls who do not enjoy a little dance when it comes, so seldom, and I am not one of those hermit girls—though I shall never *dote* on my balls and parties like some people—God forbid that I should even : women are put into the world to be useful and not to idle their time away."

Constance writes :

" DECEMBER 20th, 1858 : A fine day!! We resolved upon taking a very long ride but not having told Edmond early enough, we could not ride until the afternoon. We were occupied with our lessons all the morning which were occasionally interrupted by little conversations with Mademoiselle about her intended marriage. After dinner we dressed and mounted our horses at half past two. The afternoon was exceedingly mild and delightful and nothing could be pleasanter than rushing at full gallop over the enormous velvety grass fields.

" We had just crossed the line, when we espied a number of red coats and a crowd of dogs. ' The huntsmen, the huntsmen ! ' screamed Edward " [her first cousin, the son of Nathaniel de Rothschild] " and insisted upon our rushing after them. As soon as we approached near to them we distinguished Uncle Lionel, Uncle Mayer and Alf. They all looked very much astonished when we appeared and rode about the fields with us. Poor Natty was unable to take part in the hunt. We were soon

¹ Their companion governess.

obliged to leave the gentlemen as it was getting quite dark. We rode down the green lane by moonlight and a ride it was, through mud and puddles, splash, splash onwards always onwards, until at last we arrived very hot at home. The sun had long since disappeared and the round full silver moon was rising high in the skies. I was astonished to find that Mamma was not at all anxious, indeed she had hardly expected us home before then. When I was dressed I wrote a letter to Mr Goldberg inviting him to come down on Sunday and to stay until Monday. I hope that he will do so for I should like to see Mlle as much as possible before she goes away for ever. We read French after my letter and then we had a good and merry tea at which meal I talked a quantity of nonsense."

"DECEMBER 23rd, 1858: I could think of nothing all day but that it was Mlle's wedding day. I should not see her again for a year and that when we did meet she would be a different person, married and altogether changed. The subject was too painful to be dwelt upon and I banished it as speedily as possible but even My Novel could not take it quite out of my head."

"DECEMBER 24th: I was delighted to see that the day was so fine because I was to go to London. . . . I read the life of Romulus by Plutarch in the train which I find extremely interesting. . . . I at last drove to George Street and with a beating heart I enquired if Madame Goldberg were at home. The answer was yes. I rushed upstairs from the darkness into a blaze of light and saw indistinctly figures moving before me. I only recognized Evy and was advancing to her when Mme approached and kissed me very warmly. She next introduced me to Monsieur Goldberg but I was trembling so violently that I could hardly look at him. He is decidedly good looking but not an Adonis, his complexion is olive, his eyes brown melting and soft, his mouth and teeth beautiful, his nose is too large and fat, his hair is black as ebony and his whiskers beard and moustache are auburn. He appeared very amiable and gentlemanly; he poured us out some champagne and gave us some wedding cake. Mme looked very well, not at all tired; I really could hardly

credit that she was married. I stayed but a short time and arrived at Grosvenor Place with an aching head. . . .

"We slept wonderfully well and I dreamt all night of Monsieur and Madame Goldberg."

Annie merely remarks :

"Mme Goldberg brought her husband to Aston Clinton for the day and they went over to Mentmore. Mr Goldberg is rather ugly *au premier abord*, but improves very much. His eyes light up and he talks pleasantly. I felt rather shy next to his wife who was boisterously merry. . . . We showed him the whole house which of course he admired. He followed Mademoiselle about like a dog and appeared quite led by her. She is certainly a very decisive character and that will be good for him who is so extremely undecided."

This Mademoiselle's successor is described in amusing terms by Annie :

"At last the carriage drove up to the door, Connie went to meet her and soon returned with a person so unlike anything I had imagined that I could do nothing but stare. Mademoiselle Maret large, with an expressive face though broad and fat, pretty eyes mouth and teeth ugly nose and complexion looked shy and awkward. We immediately had tea. She ate nothing and said nothing but stared at Connie and laughed, *Mais comme vous êtes forte Mademoiselle . . .*"

About a week later Annie patronizingly remarks that Mademoiselle showed that :

"she thought and thought for herself. I had not thought her capable of so much. . . .

" . . . We read french, Mlle Maret who is exaggeratedly delicate skipped every little part about the chansons d'amours in the literature.

"Our Hebrew was not quite so good as usual but the little Cat could not see anything bad in it today. After lunch we took a long walk in the avenue in the beech wood. The little Doctor teased Mlle Maret very much about her stupid little blue book which she had brought

with her out of doors. He tried to lead her into a spirited conversation, but she could not and her only answers were hurried taps on his back. How different from Mme Goldberg whose clever and spirited repartees would have astonished us all. However this amused us immensely ; Mlle Maret fought with her strong arms and the Doctor with his tongue ! We laughed to our hearts content although we could not think it *convenable* of a lady . . .”

Constance writes of her quick-tempered little sister :

“ We had a French *dictée* after breakfast ; for a wonder *a great wonder* Annie had more mistakes than I had ; I am sorry to say that she quite lost her temper and was very angry and pettish the whole morning. It really makes me sorry to see the impertinent answers that Annie often gives to Mamma without the slightest provocation for them. I do not believe that any of my cousins would say similar things to Aunt Louisa. . . .”

Annie's tongue was accustomed to run away with her sometimes in anger, but sometimes also in fun. Some days later her sister writes :

“ When we were at home again and at our lessons Mr Jeremy began coughing, whereupon he said ‘ I must beg of you to excuse my barking.’ Annie replied ‘ We have so many dogs here that one more does not signify.’ Annie is really very witty sometimes only she ought to accustom herself not to be continually trying to pun.”

Among the letters, I found one to Lady de Rothschild from Mr. Jeremy, thanking her for her twenty-fifth annual present of a Christmas turkey.

Annie's taste for drawing began early, and she writes :

“ How I should like to paint like a genius, to have an innate genius, to be self taught, to see masterly drawings developed under my pencil. Yes I should like it, but it is good that I have not been thus favoured that I have only a

little natural talent for it does not give rise to the love of superiority so characteristic of me. I like to show my superiority of drawing over Connie, my superiority in playing some pieces of brilliancy, my superiority in my little knowledge of Hebrew, my superiority of reasoning powers in geometry over Doretta. It is a very difficult fault this to cut out, so difficult do I find it not to exult in the little I know. I find myself as an almost invisible insect before the great men, the painters the composers, the authors the philosophers that have thrown an everlasting lustre in the history of the world. And these like so many grains of sand before the myriads of worlds the mysterious universe are completely [dimmed ?] by the eternal glory of the great Supreme Being. With all my faults I have an innate respectful love for religion an enthusiastic adoration for the holy creed of Judaism. May God forgive me but in even this I did not wish to be inferior to any one. I heard with envy of Clemmey's¹ sudden zeal. Is that the way to show my reverence to Him who hath said love thy neighbour like thyself Oh Almighty God, hear my prayer, make my heart soft and charitable to all those around me, that I may be worthy of being one of those chosen ones for thou hast said through thy prophet Moses that we shall love our fellow creatures. . . ."

Annie is evidently rather impressed by her own fervour. Two days after this entry we find :

" . . . After our quiet little tea I wrote my journal I wrote all the serious part of Monday and Tuesday. I was indeed very seriously inclined, have since kept my steady resolution to be more charitable and kindhearted. . . ."

There are several of her sketch books, showing a good deal of talent and a great deal of humour. Mr. Callow's opinions of Annie's sketches make Constance somewhat doubtful of the fitness of their new drawing-master.

¹ Her cousin, daughter of Baroness Charles de Rothschild.

"Mrs Chappell came at her usual hour and at half past eleven in a funny little chaise appeared Mr Callow. He is a tall thin man, with iron grey hair and a short grey beard, his eyes are grey and his complexion has a certain greyish tinge likewise. He does not appear to understand anything at all about heads for he turned the leaves of Annie's book without any comment, only when he came to the little Cat's he exclaimed 'How funny!' He drew for us two little landscapes which we are to copy. At dinner he spoke of his travels on the continent and of Venice and the means of arriving there, he was full of the praise of the gondolas when Mrs Chappell began 'And we saw Venice in London, Mr Callow, we saw three *real* gondolas, real gondolas at the Princess's.' Never before did Mrs Chappell appear so silly as she then did, and we could hardly forbear smiling at such childishness."

Sometimes poor Annie seems rather overwhelmed by her work, which appears to have been considerable for one so young. She writes in despair :

"... I must work and read and reread and look over and correct and be busy from morn till night. It is a source of anxiety to me, whether I can continue you my dear journal, there will be singing and playing and drawing. Good-gracious !

"... Occupation is the very murderer of time, far, far more than pleasure and amusement. As for me, I do not like the days to rush on and on and on in one continual, rapid, and even movement. I prefer the gushing cascade that foams and bubbles, skipping from rock to rock. But to return to the realities of life, for stop it as I may the time has fled, the morning is past and unless my journal comes to a full stop it must not linger on the way. ..."

There is a delicious episode in which their mother tries to insist on reading Annie's letter to one of their cousins. Here is what Annie writes :

"Mamma accused me of having been violent and

tempestuous. I have really not been passionate this week and I really think one who has a naturally hottish temper ought to be a little encouraged when she does all in her power to subdue it, but Mamma cannot understand that, however good sympathizing and kind she is.

"When I was in the middle of my letter Mamma came in and I showed her Emmy's letter Mamma read it, admired it, and then asked me for mine which I refused to give her. I really could not . . . It pained me to see how angry Mamma looked but I would not show it. I had *ci inclu*, written about Mr H. and A——, and on no account would have shown it to anyone else. Mamma soon called me into the other room and told me angrily that she intended turning over a new leaf, and looking at our letters! that it was our own faults caused by our own continual refusal. I was dumbstruck and could not say a word but tearfully left the room; I told it to Connie who continued arguing a long time, about it, saying she intended never writing, that she much preferred not writing at all to being subjected to such rule. That it was unjust, ridiculous! and we both rose to a pitch of furious indignation which I could hardly restrain. And even when I think of it now, I cannot help thinking it wrong, that young girls may not have secrets together and may not write things forbidden to be seen. Mamma forbade the subject to be again mentioned. I went to bed crying with vexation could not sleep till late."

Constance, too, writes of her indignation and continues the story on the next day, Dec. 26, 1858:

"Annie rose first and as usual dressed very quickly While my hair was being done, I wrote my journal which however, did not go brilliantly because of a long conversation with Annie who returned from Mamma's room telling me that she had been expostulating and explaining to Mamma about the letter writing. Annie maintained rightly that we had no secrets from Mamma and that there are and always will be nonsensical things between young girls which cannot be related to everybody. But Mamma said that we ought to have nothing secret and would not understand all Annie's explanations. . . ."

Constance's journal had been begun at the age of fifteen, when they were on a visit to their German cousins at the Gunthersburg near Frankfort.

"JUNE 27, 1858. Yesterday morning we went to swim. We met Ferdie at the Mainland where we showed him the parts of the charade. Then we swam about, I really having the courage to jump in four times. When I was once on the board, I looked up and saw Ferdie laughing at us which made me jump into the water with a little shriek. . . .

"... The afternoon was lovely and our drive was delicious, while Annie was coachman, Göbels¹ talked the greatest nonsense to us all about his loves. . . .

"We all drove to the Kursaal where we had an excellent tea and then Louisa played and sang while we danced and laughed and talked."

They must indeed have been merry. She adds :

"We waited three quarters of an hour for the train and when we were in it we made such a dreadful noise that all the guards laughed."

She was sorry when the visit was over and on the morning of her departure she writes :

"In the morning I woke up with the unpleasant thought that it was our last day in Frankfort, I felt extremely sad and almost ill-humoured but I endeavoured to shake off my gloom and not to make our last day in Frankfort a disagreeable one.

"I should like to have stayed some time with reminiscences of the past floating before my eyes. I could almost fancy that I saw the despised Jews of old walking again in that narrow street and my cheeks burned as I thought of the cries and taunts which were always sounded in their ears."

Next day she writes characteristically from Paris :

¹ The coachman.

"This morning we went after breakfast to see the library, it is quite stupefying to see the volumes and volumes heaped one above the other, it is quite dreadful to think that all this has been composed, written, printed and that more and more works are appearing every day. From the library we drove to the Hotel des Invalides, which is extremely interesting and we viewed the tomb of Napoleon the great, the eagle-hearted man."

"SATURDAY: Paris. Yesterday morning we saw so many dresses, that our eyes were quite tired out."

Constance seems to get most of her gossip from her older cousin, Evy.

"After our usual Saturday occupations we dressed and went to Piccadilly. . . . Evy came in merry, in the highest spirits possible. . . . Of course Evy teased me but I did not mind it as I am getting accustomed to it. After lunch all the others arrived and made a most fearful noise. . . . After chatting for about an hour with Evy and Laurie we departed and returned home. We read German in the middle of which we foolishly began to talk. Annie got very rude and in the heat and impetuosity of the moment I gave her a slap in her face. Mamma came up after a few moments and asked her why her cheek was red. Annie said the reason and Mamma forbade me to come down in the evening when there was to be a little dinner party. I was both angry and sorry and ran hastily away. After spending a half an hour upstairs I went down stairs and looked at the people who came."

"FRIDAY: There was a small dinner party, Laurie looked very pretty. Evy was in a wonderfully good humour as she usually is. They all wrote their names in my paper which passed round from one person to another. When we went to bed Evy came with us, and told us of all Joe's¹ proposals. Poor fellow, he certainly has not had much luck in marriage and now I suppose he will remain a bachelor. . . ."

"AUG. 1, 1858. E. asked me if I loved Natty. I said I did not know what being in love meant. Whereupon E.

¹ Her uncle—Joseph Montefiore.

gave me a long explanation not quite incorrect with some conjectures which I had. I vowed that I liked Natty very much but I did not say anything more. I know I am weak but I believe that I shall be able to love and I am sure that that love will take full possession of me and that it may be returned! Lord God help thy child!

"... During dinner Evy related stories of the Duc de Malakoff and said that she wished soon to be married in order to chaperone me when I am out. . . .

"... Evy appeared in the morning and whilst Annie dressed she related to me Lady Waldegrave's whole history. The story would take far too long to write down here.

"After lunch we proposed going to see the convent at which I was delighted, Leo (aged 10) wished ardently to be of the party but as no male is allowed to enter we determined upon his dressing up as a lady. The transformation was quickly made and Leo entered a very pretty young lady with a graceful tournure and with modest downcast eyes. I thought it was wrong to impose upon the good nuns but all objections were removed and Leo entered the carriage amidst the laughter of the servants and the coachman. After a great many detours we arrived at the convent gate which was instantly opened and we entered first the garden and then the house. To the general consternation Monseigneur Turl, a man who had seen Leo once appeared, but he took no notice of the transformed boy.

"After quitting the chapel we saw a room full of penitents who wore blue gowns and white caps. These poor girls are rescued from their sinful lives and are brought back to paths of happiness and peace. The faith that the nuns evinced is marvellous, they look at death merely as a happy release from the sorrows of the world and do not grieve when one of their sisters dies. Such faith must be delightful to have: no uncertainties, no doubts, to be able to think of the fearful passage which we must pass with calm pleasure. The convent was very interesting and we left it sorrowfully but the time pressed and I was obliged to bid good-bye to that charming Sister Mary Elizabeth."

A few days later she writes :

" We talked about ladies smoking in general and about Julia's in particular. We all agreed that we did not like a lady to smoke regularly day after day but that at times a chance cigar is very pleasant.

These Victorian girls seem not only to smoke occasionally, but at the same date, 1858, one of the family describes at Scarborough how :

" Pictures, living pictures, in the Albanian style are on view from morning till night, not as in London on the banks of the Serpentine, veiled by the pearly mists of the early hours, or partly concealed by twilight shades, but in the full glare of day and sunshine. Here is complete absence of costume as in the garden of Eden before the fall of man, and hundreds of ladies and gentlemen look on, while the bathers plunge in the foaming waters, or emerge from them." " I really think [she adds] the police should interfere."

Both journals give long descriptions of an eventful New Year's Day. Constance describes how the day began by giving presents to the dependants :

1859. "... I gave Doretta her bracelet and Annie put into her hands the beautiful violet dress. I never saw anyone more delighted and her joy was redoubled when Mamma gave her a ten pound note. As for Jane she became red and white with surprise when she received her money. . . ."

Annie continues :

" . . . We then *enfin*, had prayers. I tried to distract my attention from balls and dresses etc. and succeeded very well. I was wrapt up in my prayers and was only thinking of the grace of the Almighty. We were afterwards interrupted by Mr Helbert who would come in and talk nonsense. I thought him a great bore and now and then expressed my feelings. At last Doretta, Connie and

I partook of a very good dinner after which we tucked up petticoats and sallied out. We paid Mrs Ivory a visit and Miss Ginger and Mr Allen and returned home at 4½. I went and talked a little to Mamma who was dressed and I talked nonsense to Mr Helbert, I hope I did not flirt with him! No that is impossible. At 5 o'clock we dressed. We were nearly an hour and a half at our toilette. Connie picked herself a camelia but I did not dare to there were so few in the conservatory. When my hair was finished Connie asked Mamma if I might have one also but the answer was no. This I confess made me feel very angry. I thought I did not see anything too old in a camelia for me and it was silly and unkind (I was silly). Mamma came up and asked me if I minded it, of course I said no, upon which Jane said I think Miss Annie is very much disappointed. I could not help being angry at this interference for it was nothing less, but Mamma soon returned with a bud in her hand with which I adorned myself. What vanity! We then went to Mrs Higgins. . . ."

Constance's journal resumes :

" . . . Our white muslins looked very pretty and simple and I felt very pleased that Mamma had ordered white instead of black.

" Doretta and I drove to Mentmore in the brougham, we talked a little *en route* just enough not to make the way seem tedious.

" When we arrived we went into the green room which we found crowded. Hatty Russell was there, looking so pretty, graceful and lively. Juliana was beautifully dressed but looked nervous and excited. After waiting some time we went into the hall where the stage was erected. The bell rang, the curtain drew up and little Hannah appeared in the garb of a sheppardess curtsying and saying a prologue quite distinctly and without fear. She was very much clapped, and called out several times. The play now began in real earnest : it was a very pretty little piece, the actors were beautifully dressed and looked extremely well, Evy and Leo particularly.

“ When the play was over we all rushed into supper and from there to the hall where the dancing began. Madame de Persigny¹ was certainly the prettiest in the room. Her dress was simple but becoming and her headdress was quite beautiful. We danced away till the end of the ball without sitting down once and returned after a most delightful evening at two o’clock.”

The following morning she

“ did not feel at all tired and was delighted that Mamma allowed me to have another ride with the gentlemen. . . .”

Annie was much more keen about riding than her sister. In fact, Constance’s nervousness had evidently been the subject of anxious prayers, as she writes :

“ Our ride was delightful, we rode over the fields where I summoned up enough courage to jump over small ditches on Roland. How much more agreeable my rides are now that I am not the least frightened and can do anything I like with Roland. I am sure that God has helped me to become more courageous, how happy I ought to feel to think that God listened to my prayers. . . .”

Another ride is described by Constance with great animation :

“ After a little lunch we dressed and mounted our horses. I was astonished to find that we had no groom and quite relied on our gentlemen to open all the gates. We went across the fields to Mentmore and at last arrived quite bespattered with mud in a terrible state. We of course were obliged to go in for a few minutes all the party seemed most astonished to see us and greeted us as heroines. They could not imagine how we had ventured out in such a fog and seemed still more startled at our returning across country when we could hardly see our way. Evy did not say two words to me ; she was quite engrossed with Madame de Persigny who certainly

¹ Wife of the French ambassador.

succeeded if her intention was to excite general wonder. Her costume was composed of a lilac stuff dress looped over a yellow petticoat neck and arms were adorned with costly jewellery.

"Juliana was in a capital humour and pressed us to remain for dinner which we of course declined. After calling our gentlemen together we mounted. Alf placed me on the saddle with a marvellous grace and dexterity.

"We were very merry riding, Mr Delane¹ imitating Annie's face when she was splashed which made us all laugh. We arrived at four famished and had a very good dinner by candlelight. Madame Goldberg left at 7 o'clock but as there was a dense fog she missed the train and after telegraphing to Monsieur G. returned to Aston Clinton. She looked very much disappointed and withdrew to her room.

We spent a delightful evening. We talked about all sorts of things, among others about the convent near Gunnersbury. Mr Delane laughed immensely at Father H— being a father confessor though I think that it is not impossible that a man of dissolute habits may be revered."

Both girls speak enthusiastically of their first hunt.

"To-day we are to ride to the meet and to hunt were my thoughts as I came down stairs and saw before me a brilliantly blue sky and a bright sun. Annie was in excellent spirits her greatest wish was to be fulfilled and certainly she was a different being from yesterday all life and gaiety and extremely good-humoured at her music which she is not generally when I play badly."

Annie's journal throws light on Constance's reference to the previous day:

"Had a dispute with Connie about journals. Connie does not think them a good plan. I do, and said I wondered why she did not give it up, she made no answer

¹ Editor of *The Times*.



MEET AT MENTMORE, 1876
Hannah de Rothschild, afterwards Lady Rosebery, in pony carriage By kind permission of The Earl of Rosebery

and looked cross, I became angry, A journal is good I now see how silly I was to become so warm and am very sorry indeed that I was so, and will try and repent.

"At 10" [Annie continues] "we go to dress and await our ponies. Papa promised not to be nervous and I think he nearly succeeded. We then set off, with a groom behind us and the little boy on Sybille. I wanted to give the ponies a good gallop, but Papa was now and then frightened, and so we rode at a gentle pace to which the horses are very little accustomed. . . ."

"... It took us a whole hour" [Constance resumes] "before we arrived at Mentmore. When we approached the terrace we found a very gay scene assembled, more than a hundred redcoats on handsome spirited horses. Evy and Georgie were well mounted and Hannah and Leo on their ponies followed. We rode first to one cover and then to another but no fox could be found until at last it was getting so late that we left the sportsmen and went back to Mentmore."

Annie again shows her ardour for riding and her impatience of control :

"... Papa went early, we hoped to ride but Mamma would not allow it. How ridiculous to be tied to Edmond's coat-strings, but if Mamma wont allow it I can do nothing and a ride is not really worth putting Mamma in hysterics so I must not think of riding till Wednesday comes, and then I am afraid half the pleasure will be spoilt by Papa's nervousness."

One amusing difference between the children is that Annie hates her health being noticed, and finds it hard to sympathise with her less stoical sister.

"... Connie's cold increasing she makes eyes and rolls her head about and sneezes and coughs and says she cannot see and I, bad naughty I, feel miserably contemptuous. I am very sorry and pity myself for it is the effects of an evil heart. May God forgive me but what is the use of it without repentance. Prayer is blasphemy without repentance, and though I know Connie does make

a fuss about herself and frightens Mama to death I ought not to be so harsh and unkind. . . .”

Two days later she writes :

“ . . . On his return the little Doctor told us that they intended acting a play called ‘ Perfection.’ I felt quite envious when he said all was arranged. I felt certainly that I shall not play and I was so sorry ! I never knew till then how I adored acting ! I should never have believed anyone if they said, you will be envious when they tell you that the Gunnersburies will act a play without you—— Unable to appear as merry as the rest I went away, very vexed and angry—— As for dear Connie she looked delighted at the idea of looking on enchanted ; but I is it not perhaps a little conceit that taught me to think myself such a distinguished actor that no one can get up a play without me. . . .

“ At half past six the Cat took his departure and Connie went to bed—I practised. At about seven o’clock when I read a little before tea, Jane enters without saying a word takes the lamp away leaving us in darkness—this impoliteness made me feel very cross and I went up. Finding Connie asleep, ‘ What did she want a lamp for ? ’ I said to Jane who looked impertinent and came down again with the lamp ‘ what for ? ’ ’cause Annie’s so cross’ and goes away. I should like to slap her face when she comes back again horrid thing ! She comes back for Connie’s tea ! Looks as disagreeable as ever I do not say a word to her ! but return good for evil and offer her a eatable—accepted and goes—I breathe freely. . . .”

Annie is very much irritated by the maid’s most natural concern for her health.

“ . . . I noticed that Mamma looked at me every moment. She enquired whether I had a sore throat. I said which was quite true it had been so but now there was only a tickling. This is Jane’s doing I said why did I tell her anything. When I went up Jane was in tears calling me an angel and entreating me to tell her what was the

matter with me, telling me nothing was so dangerous as a sore throat I might very easily die. She was very disagreeable now cross and in tears, now entreating now angry, and never going away. She told Mamma all sorts of stupid things about us, and went on in her ridiculous way till twelve o'clock. We could not go to sleep. Connie was *empationée* so was I, and at last I took refuge at Mamma's as she was so disagreeable."

We again see her peculiar reserve on the subject of her health when she writes :

" . . . We had a quiet and consequently a very quick tea not saying much and eating less for they gave us nasty hard things which a pig would disdain or perhaps it was my cold that gave me the bad taste for though I did not like Doretta to notice I must confess my thoughts were how bad my cold was."

Lady Battersea often told me how she and her sister were encouraged to visit the cottages in their village, though her cousins, possibly from fear of infection, were kept more apart from the country people. One of the entries in her journal at the age of fifteen reads :

" How happy it is that Mamma is not proud and allows us to go about among the farmers and people, how much happier we are than if we kept exclusively and carefully to ourselves."

There are many accounts of their visits among their poorer neighbours. Another day :

" We went into one cottage where a young woman sat with a baby of about four months in her arms. Mamma asked the unlucky question ' How long have you been married ? ' ' A half year ' was the answer. Mamma hurried out of the cottage and was determined not to give her anything. If Mamma practised this upon the people there would be few to whom she would give presents."

A few days later :

" I related to Mlle our little histories with the young women and their babies but the latter did not look very much shocked ; she said that she had heard always the same complaint so that she had now got used to it. She said the scandal in London was worse than in any village and that if you condemned a fashionable lady you must pity a poor girl. All this is true, but still it is terrible to think of the immorality here and one could wish to do something for it however little it may be.

" Mamma started a new subject by saying that ' the Merchant of Venice ' would have pleased her quite as well if the scenery had been less magnificent. Annie as usual seconded Mamma and even thought that she should have liked it better represented on plain boards with a green baize curtain. ' But then ' said I, ' You might as well read the pieces as see them performed.' ' O no,' was the answer, ' for there would be no acting.' But we could not convince each other, to-day I mean to ask Dr Kalisch what he thinks on the subject.

" After dinner we walked to Miss Jenny's. Miss Jenny spoke of the dreadful immorality about here and how one girl of sixteen nearly beat her child to death."

Annie, too, speaks of visiting Miss Jenny :

" Got up late and read a mass of Charlotte Brontë very amusing indeed, extremely interesting ; continue reading till breakfast. We all had breakfast together for the first time on Saturdays good old Sir John¹ very merry indeed. After prayers go to the school. The weather is beautiful, on our return have our usual occupations. I am as usual charged for impatience why I do not know. I really do not think I have been impatient of late. We did our Hebrew till dinner. We then had a very nice walk to Miss Jenny. Poor Miss Jenny was very melancholy, as they were daily expecting the death of poor old Mr Jenny. It is odd thus to talk of death ! Death is a subject to me which you can see and think of but cannot talk of. Indeed however ill he be I could never

¹ Sir John Hippesley.

think of the death of one I love. It may be reconed as a want of faith ! I know it is not. I do not mean by that, that I shall not be prepared to die when the time comes."

Constance also gives a description of visiting in the City :

" After tea we drove to the City. Devonshire Square was ornamented in our honour, all looked very nice and clean the girls were neatly dressed without any finery. They sang very well indeed ; they might teach us all a lesson of contentment if we think that they have been all day in hot rooms working hard and still they look happy cheerful and merry."

At Christmas time Constance talks of her commissions tiring her very much, as she buys twenty-five dresses for distribution as presents, and goes to the Portland Bazaar.

From her, also, we hear of further charities at Aston Clinton:

" A very icy cold day. I thought how the poor people would freeze standing in the passages but, however, it was better for them to stand a little and return laden with blankets than for them to pass cold freezing nights with hardly anything on their beds. We were very busy indeed all the morning and we dined at one so as to be able to begin our business early. At two o'clock I was seated before the window of the housekeeper's room with my list. I called the people who came in from the passage and gave me their tickets through the window and then passed on to the other window, where Mamma and Annie gave the things away. All went on in excellent order and I think that everybody was satisfied."

In both journals there are constant references to the school, and in her *Reminiscences* Lady Battersea describes its foundation.

" At that time, in the 'fifties, the only day-school in Aston Clinton was kept by a drunken schoolmaster, who had about thirty miserable dejected-looking male scholars.

This was the National School, under the Rector's sway, and a disgracefully bad one it was.

"During those years straw-plaiting was the staple industry and main feature of the county. Schools for teaching children to plait were held by a few old women in the village. One of these schools at Aston Clinton was presided over by a little cripple. . . . The atmosphere was asphyxiating.

"At the early age of eleven I developed a passion for teaching, and, my sister obediently conforming to my wishes, we both resolved, if permitted, to introduce some measure of education into the school of our friend the dame. We explained our wishes and designs to the accommodating dame, and armed with some lesson-books, we proceeded to instruct the little 'plaiters.' They were delightfully ignorant, and we enjoyed ourselves extremely, and were even encouraged to go further afield to another school of the same sort in our village.

"On one damp, warm afternoon in autumn our mother found us immersed in this, our favourite occupation, and was so horrified at the atmosphere she encountered upon entering the room that she forbade us to continue our self imposed work. Great distress resulted on our part, but we were not to be beaten."

They then taught in the boys' school on Saturday afternoon when it was vacant. In her 'Reminiscences' Lady Battersea writes :—

"Our mother soon felt that our youthful attempts at instruction should give place to some method of real education, so my kind and ever-generous father, obedient to her desire, built a beautiful girls' school for the village of Aston Clinton. . . . In an early diary of that date I find : 'The wish of my heart is now granted, we have a school of our own at Aston Clinton. . . .' When a few years later it had become too small for the number of scholars, my dear father enlarged it, and later again he was faced by the fact that it could not contain the infants—boys and girls—who were then becoming eligible for school attendance.

"It was about that time that, my father asking me

what I should like to have for a birthday present, I boldly answered, 'An Infant's School.' My request was granted, and I was allowed to lay the first stone of the new building. I must add that the capital teaching in this school, with the songs and recitations of the infants, greatly entertained my dear father for many years. . . ."

In the journals of 1858 there are constant references to going to the school on wet days or fine. Annie writes :

"After breakfast went to the school the children sang with me pretty well. . . . On our return Mr Jeremy came. I did not pay my usual attention to the geometry, and therefore did not understand it quite well. I felt jealous because Doretta, whose reasoning powers I hold in contempt, did it better. . . ."

Constance describes a visit to the school by Mrs. Harris and her daughters, who collaborated with Lady de Rothschild in her visiting classes in the City and East End :

" . . . We drove to Aston Clinton where we found nearly all the children assembled and long tables laid in the garden. I could not help feeling delighted that one of my greatest wishes had been attained, that the eighty-five children all round one table came to a good wholesome school where they learned something better than plaiting. The evening was perfectly delicious as I walked about teaching the children games. . . ."

It is amusing to picture Annie, barely thirteen, as a school-teacher :

"After breakfast we went to the school where I taught the children. I explained to them all about armour in terms as simple as the subject permitted but I am not sure that they understood me. . . ."

The first reference to Matthew Arnold, who became, later, one of their mother's warmest friends and admirers, occurs in Constance's journal in 1858, when Arnold was Inspector of Schools.

"WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17th: was the examination day and with a little heart beating I accompanied Mlle to the school. Mr Arnold had just arrived and was talking to Mamma in Miss Devenham's little parlour. He is a tall pleasant faced man and looks very amiable. He questioned the children well but little, poor Isabella Gambell was so frightened that she burst into tears and was obliged to go into the garden. Mr Arnold pronounced the school to be in charming order, the appearance of the girls he found very nice, their writing neat, their reading good, their arithmetic passable. We just looked in on Mrs Philbey when we returned, so as to give Mr Arnold an idea of the plaiting schools."

It will be seen what a healthy, happy life the children led. Perhaps the only remarkable feature in it was that their society was rather more cosmopolitan, and their studies more varied and advanced, than those of most children, while Constance showed a stronger love of reading than was common at her age. Her delight in her books lasted until the end of her life. We find constant references to her interest in books :

"After dinner we wrote Hebrew and German and then I went in the brougham to Mrs Disraeli whom I was to accompany to Holland House. Nobody could be merrier or more chatty during the drive than she was, she told me little anecdotes about the Queen and Princess Royal which were exceedingly amusing.

"When we arrived at our destiny, we were told that Lady Holland was not at home. I could hardly express my disappointment for I had always longed to peep behind those tall iron gates. Mrs Disraeli very kindly told the porter that I much wished to see the house and begged of him to open the gates. After some hesitation he did so at last and to my delight and surprise I found myself at the door of the far famed Holland House. Mrs Disraeli and I instantly commenced a voyage of discovery round the garden which is tastefully laid out and beautifully kept. Then we turned to the house which

consists of turrets and gables and little windows in every corner and little rooms where no one can imagine they would be. But all my ecstasies were reserved for the library, all that my imagination had ever pictured could never have pictured that library. So long and low with the arched ceiling, the leathern chairs and the bookcases filled with endless volumes.

"O charming Holland House! You will live long in my memory!

"But how interesting it is to dive deeper into the treasures of Genesis to see unfolded before you mysteries which have confused and bewildered the wisest reason. The rest of the morning I spent with Macaulay's Milton, Southey's life of Lord Nelson and the civil disabilities of the Jews. I read successively with raptures."

She evidently shares her mother's admiration of Macaulay, describing his "glowing and striking words." Of Milton she says:

"Live on, live on, Milton, in the hearts of your countrymen. . . ."

And again:

"When we read the sweet *Hebrew Melodies* does not a phantom rise before our eyes, a beautiful honoured favoured, wretched, miserable phantom, the phantom of the great and unhappy Byron? Can we not fancy him at the pinnacle of all earthly power loved, courted, honoured by all and then the sweet moments sunk in the dust quitting his country with a goaded spirit to die forgotten in another land?

"Macaulay, you have done that spirit justice!

"What a great, what a glorious triumph it is for us to know that an author so great, so gifted as Macaulay is, should write with so much truth and liberality about us, an oppressed people. Ought we not to render him a tribute of thankfulness for his abiding so fearlessly, so truthfully by our cause!

"The afternoon was spent by me in reading *Oliver Twist*. The evening was devoted to Sir Walter Scott. We

finished the first volume of the *Monastery*; it is very interesting, rather dark and mysterious, but I do not like it as well as his other tales."

Evidently the children shared their parents' interest in the subject of the entrance of Jews into Parliament, for little Annie writes :

"There is however one thing that haunts me. Something that Aunt Lou said two years ago. Should the Jews come into parliament there would probably be many that changed. It seems to me then the greatest misfortune that could befall the Jews would then be their having come into Parliament. I should like to be a man to elevate my poor, sunken race, to make them better and more solid men; to forget all past injuries, only think of the present worth. But I am a woman and must think of myself and my own circle.

"After prayers we did our Hebrew and read with the Cat, the interesting part of Abraham's life. At the end Mamma told us of a new arrangement. She intended giving us £50 to buy our own bonnets, hats, shoes, collars, gloves and ribbons and all sorts of little things; talk about this new arrangement . . .

"We afterwards wrote English, till dinner, when the weather continued blubbering and blustering. . . ."

while Connie adds, after a performance of *The Merchant of Venice* :

"... I am sorry that a piece that excites antipathy against the Jews should be brought on the stage, for the English people are too prone to believe a great deal against the Jews. . . ."

This is how in 1858 their world strikes Constance and Annie, while they still can only be considered as children. They show a good deal of discrimination in their remarks on people and things, and perhaps we may close this chapter with a quotation from Constance's journal, which gives the

keynote to that intense sociability which endured to the end of her life.

“ We dressed and went in after dinner ; Lady Lyndhurst insisted upon seeing all the bedrooms, I conducted her upstairs, she would look at everything and expressed her satisfaction very loudly ” [According to Annie’s journal, she “ squeaked with delight at the diningroom.”] “ I then had the pleasure of a long conversation with Mr Bernard who discussed music, german, literature, Germany, France etc., etc. He was followed by Mr de Laine who talked about geometry, history, literature and all the requisites for education. Unfortunately our conversation was interrupted . . . When I returned I found myself suddenly opposite Doctor Connell and so we had a very pleasant talk together. I went to bed at half past eleven after having amused myself extremely. In bed I thought a good deal about our conversations and I turned over in my mind why I had been so pleased whilst conversing. I had just happened to have chatted with three nice clever men perhaps that had flattered my self love ; no, it was not that, it was that the conversations were not trivial and that there was something really interesting in them.”

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CHAPTER VI

1861-1871

Religion—Work—Social amusements—Travels

AFTER 1858 there comes a series of very small, metal-clasped notebooks, in which Constance writes her thoughts and experiences. So small are they that the books are difficult to decipher. The first of these is of the year 1861, when she is eighteen, and they extend over a period of nearly twenty years, though there are also some larger notebooks in which she has written from time to time and recorded some of her trips abroad. These become more frequent as the years go by.

During the first five or six years she still pursues her studies with great earnestness and they absorb a large amount of her time. In the first little book (1861) we read :

“ Studied carefully the five chapters of the Bible so that I shall know them well for the dear Puss. It seems to take me into the spirit of the Bible and I long to become closer acquainted with all its pages. Read our Hebrew in the morning.

“ Worked steadily at my story. Turned to trigonometry after breakfast which we found very amusing and not too difficult, after which added up my accounts, which O joyful surprise! came out right and left me quite rich.

“ Mr Jeremy came by the first train, so we of course devoted ourselves to mathematics. We progressed well

for three hours, at the end of which time I became rather tired and to everybody's horror was obliged to leave off. I am persevering, but my head not being of the strongest, I cannot continue for any great length of time. Went to soft, beautiful nature after lunch, with her varied charms, her delicious sweetness and fragrance. A little algebra afterwards."

As a young woman, Constance evidently gave much thought to religion. In her little diaries there are many observations about the Holy Days of Judaism and Christianity. In 1861 she wrote :

" The evening of the Fast. A terrible evening always, we sat and talked and then read prayers. I prayed for strength for the great day.

" The Fast Day. A day of penance and tribulation, indeed, I felt it so. I tried not to think of hunger, dinners and teas, but I tried to question myself carefully on my sins and my faults. I have so many I feel next to Addy and Emmy, how little moral courage I have. How much bolder they are to do what is right. I am so shrinking, so timid, so afraid of everything, and I am sadly wanting in courage, I do not think I am quite scrupulous about my conduct. I must take care not to flirt. A flirt ! How terrible to think of."

Throughout the years that follow we find similar entries.

" The Fast : The much dreaded day, feared, and then how quickly over. I spent it quietly, not very badly and trying to forget the pangs of hunger and the feeling of exhaustion. Felt that the day was not an unprofitable one, and that was a subject of rejoicing. Very well indeed in the evening.

" Good Friday, or rather, ' bad Friday ' as it must always be for all of us. I thought a great deal upon those subjects, in fact, they seem to occupy me more than anything else. I, who long for true, pure, bright, simple-eyed faith feel that there is really nothing but controversy,

no two people, of whatever faith they may be, can worship together. This often makes me very wretched. . . ."

The Jewish services did not quite satisfy her, and she was much impressed by the solemnity of the Church services and by hearing sermons by some of the finest preachers of the day. She however, always had a very strong feeling for the faith in which she was born and brought up, and she never left it, although she remained open to the beauties of the Christian religion.

"... Went after lunch to Whitehall Chapel. Heard Kingsley preach. It was a fine, liberal sermon, and I liked it, but I liked the service more; the quiet, impressive devotion from that earnest congregation. . . .

"Went to Westminster Abbey which I enjoyed immensely. The place, the service, the singing, the sermon—all were so full of the true and real dignity of religion. It was most stirring, and yet, most soothing. I should like to go weekly to hear such a service. It is truly ennobling.

"We started off to synagogue, heard a bad service, horrible singing, inferior sermon—in short, we were not edified. I regret bitterly that there should be no good synagogue to which we might go with advantage every Saturday."

In order to understand Constance's character, it is necessary to realize this preoccupation with religion which underlay her exuberant and joyous vivacity. In her mother this is also very noticeable, but though intensely spiritual, she perhaps had not such a strong Jewish feeling as her daughters. She had resolved that her children should be better versed in the history and language of the Jews than she had been, and both her daughters knew Hebrew well.

As Constance grew up, her greatest friends,

with one exception, apart from her family, were Christians. We see how she enjoyed their services, and it is only natural that her active mind was exercised by the differences in religion and that she should view her own services in a more critical spirit.

The desire for vitalizing the Synagogue and for bringing it more into touch with Western ideas, which both Constance and her mother expressed, has been gradually gaining ground. As in the Christian Church, so in the Jewish, various changes are taking place, and although the old, orthodox form still continues, in what is named the Reform Synagogue part of the service is conducted in English. This Synagogue had been inaugurated in 1842, principally by the Goldsmid family, but Mr. Horatio Montefiore, the uncle of Lady de Rothschild, was also an ardent supporter—a great blow to his very orthodox brother, Sir Moses Montefiore, who, in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, was looked on as the representative and benefactor of the whole Jewish Community. Lady de Rothschild's sister, Charlotte, writes in 1841 :

“ I appeared on Thursday, radiant as the evening, and I think considering I had not dined in company for five months that I behaved pretty well. I was seated next to Babbage and Sir Moses. . . . Sir Moses was amiable. . . . He talked about the East and that made him very happy. He told me he saw every Jew in the four large Cities in the Holy Land and gave to each a dollar, or four and sixpence. No wonder they like him. . . . ”

He died in 1885 at the age of a hundred, and Lady de Rothschild writes on his death :

“ WEDNESDAY, JULY 24th : Yesterday at 4½ o'clock in the afternoon died Sir Moses Montefiore in his hundred

and first year ! A painless farewell to a long life of good, useful and charitable works. With his death much will doubtless die out of Judaism and great will be the changes that will now take place in our forms and customs—changes however which need not touch our creed or faith.”

Now there is a growing movement in England, Germany and America, for what is called Progressive Judaism, of which Mr. Claude Montefiore, the son of a Montefiore and a Goldsmid, and nephew of Lady de Rothschild, is a prominent English exponent. This movement makes for less isolation than the old Judaism, and, although in no manner regarding Christ as divine, does not discard the idea of his being one of the greatest of Jewish teachers.

As the sisters grew up their activities at Aston Clinton continued undiminished. In Constance’s journals we find :

“ We went to the school. I had my hair neatly plaited up and begged of the girls to follow my example. There was a slight astonishment on their part, but they promised.

“ Am really working quite hard for the good of the school and the village and although we cannot look for very great results, we have made a turning on the good path, and Schiller says that is enough. . . .”

And again :

“ . . . Went to the school, which was so flourishing that it did my heart good.

“ Taught the little things little bits of poetry, which amused them immensely. . . .

“ Mr Arnold arrived, examined the school and seemed satisfied. The mistress had a nervous fit, but the children did well. Found Mr Arnold quite charming and delightful. . . .”

We also read of Constance at the Jewish

Free School in London. In April 1861 she writes :

" . . . Went in the afternoon to the school and gave my first reading lesson there. The children appeared amused too. They are such dear things."

And, a little later :

" Ate up our lunch with great speed and rushed off to the City. I take great delight in the Free School ; feel then that I am in my true vocation. Nothing makes me so happy. . . ."

The following extract from a letter from Matthew Arnold to Lady de Rothschild testifies to his appreciation of the work done by the Jewish Free School in Bell Lane :

" Harrow. May 17th.

" You have often been in my mind while I have been preparing this little book, and I do not think there is anyone to whom I send it with so much pleasure. You will, I know, be interested in the attempt made, whether its execution be successful or not.

" I have sent a copy to Mr Angel [the Headmaster] as a sort of expression of gratitude for the *ideas* your great Bell Lane Schools have awakened in me. . . ."

Constance and her sister were horrified to discover in the course of their teaching at the Jewish Free Schools that only the first five books of the Bible were studied. Encouraged by their mother and Dr. Kalisch, they determined to remedy this by writing a long and serious work on the *History and Literature of the Israelites*, which, on its publication in 1870, passed through two editions.

More than once in her journals Constance refers to her work on the Bible as her " greatest pleasure in life."

"A day well fitted for work, for it was pouring with rain from morning till night. And Work I did with most decided energy. Practising and everything went better, my heart felt lighter, I felt I was doing my duties. Oh, how debasing is the existence of fine ladies. I begin to delight in my Bible work; it fills my thoughts and gives me good, holy aspirations. It makes me love my Creator the more I grow acquainted with that wonderful Bible. A sweet calm is coming over me.

"... I felt dreadfully ill and weak and could hardly understand how I could write my biblical History so courageously. Love for the work is growing upon me. I do not feel satisfied unless I have accomplished a certain amount.

"I progressed with my Joshua at a startling pace. Felt my pen flying over the paper. I was as happy as possible.

"Sat down to my 'Samuel' full of the best resolutions. . . . Finished 'Saul.' . . ."

Thus we mark her triumphant progress through all the historical books of the first half of the Old Testament (Annie was to deal with the Prophets, Psalms, Proverbs, etc.) till in January 1869 we read :

"Sent off five books to the Doctor and got all my work copied. . . ."

And finally :

"The History of Israel finished. I was in a transport."

When the work was published in 1870 both sisters were naturally very much gratified by the two following letters which they received from Disraeli :

"Grosvenor Gate,

"DEAR CONSTANCE,

"July 17, 1870.

"Your volume reached me in the midst of public

disquietude¹ and I have not been able to look at it until to-day.

"I have done so with much pleasure, for you describe in a style, animated and picturesque, the great story of our ancestors, and have treated with force and feeling their immortal annals.

"Your book is essentially narrative and not critical; and therefore I question the propriety of introducing into it the critical element; as, for example, the comment on Jacob's Blessing.

"It is not competent for the writer partially to avail himself of the principles of historical criticism; and their complete application would entirely change the whole character of your book.

"Yours sincerely,

"B. DISRAELI."

Benjamin Disraeli to Annie de Rothschild.

"Hughenden Manor,

"January 16th, 1871.

"DEAR ANNIE,

"I thank you for your book, of which I have now read the greater part.

"It is conceived in an enlightened spirit, without the introduction of disturbing criticism which would have marred the harmony of the general scheme.

"You have dealt well with the prophets, and still better with the poets; vindicating with truth and spirit the lyrical genius of the people.

"It is deeply to be regretted that we have only a portion of this ancient literature, and that preserved, and sometimes re-written, for a particular purpose. It would have been well if you had inserted in a chapter a summary of what is known to be lost: but this, perhaps, has been done in the first volume, which I have not at hand.

"It may be a question, whether, instead of the conventional and conventicle title of 'The Lord' it would not have been better to have used in your translations

¹ The Franco-Prussian War.

the real name of the God of Israel, which would have given more clearness and meaning to the narrative.

"I wish very much that Mr Renan would give us an 'Etude' of Ecclesiastes, and a new version.

"What continues to please me very much in your work is the style, which is lucid, vigorous, and graceful, and always sustained by adequate thought and feeling.

"Remember me kindly to your fellow-labourer, and congratulating you both on the completion of a work so highly praiseworthy, believe me,

"Sincerely yours,

"B. DISRAELI."

They owed some of the success of this work to Dr. Kalisch, who was able to help them considerably by his great knowledge of Hebrew. On his death in 1885 Constance writes in her journal :

"... For more than thirty years I had known Dr. K. : as a child I had been entirely devoted to him and his praise was as delightful as his blame was alarming. We did so many things to please him ; played our best, worked hard, wrote assiduously, took him our prettiest walks, and were always ready to chat and laugh with him. Distinguished, learned, erudite scholar that he was, to us he was a charming, delightful companion and I shall never forget how much I owed him. . . . How dear and sensible and truthful he was, what a head, what a heart ! . . ."

His influence over her must have been very great, as she adds :

"I have often felt when much tempted to enter another faith that the very fact of *his* existence would prevent me from doing so. . . ."

Her sister writes that she was

"inexpressibly shocked and grieved. . . . I cannot realize it. He seemed such a part of our lives, so connected with everything, from our very earliest days ; so deeply

interested in us, that his loss, although we saw him but seldom, is a very great one.

"We shall never again see anyone with his enthusiasm, his originality, his simplicity and his marvellous cleverness. Dear, wonderful, little man! . . ."

Dr. Kalisch's daughter, Mrs. Hoster, has inherited a full portion of his capacity, and has founded the first large secretarial college for women in England.

To return to the 'sixties. Besides following these more serious pursuits, Constance goes up to London for the season; she dances, she hunts.

"A new month, begun in London in the most horrible bustle of hurrying here and there and everywhere. . . ."

"We all went out hunting and enjoyed ourselves intensely. Drove to Ashridge and saw that sweet vision, Lady Brownlow. She is so beautiful and so fascinating."

In spite of her dislike of London, Constance found much to compensate her, both in gaieties and in music.

"Oh, how I hated and detested London! How I longed with all my heart and soul to be back in the country. . . ."

"Went out early. Home to dress for the concert. Oh! What a heavenly, beautiful, divine concert; what music, so soul inspiring. I was glad to be in London for such music, I felt so happy. . . ."

"JUNE 1866: Yes, in London indeed—abominable, atrocious London! I felt quite cross and angry with it, it looked so hot and glaring and dusty after the sweet, fresh country. I was in despair. I am afraid I did give way. . . ."

"We had such a bevy in the afternoon; sixteen people. I was quite astonished; how could they all have known that we were at home? . . ."

"Busy all the morning about spring garments and various other things. One's toilette in London is a

great bore. Then dressed for the Drawing-room. Felt so ridiculous in my veil and my feathers. It was a long, stupid affair, but got over well."

"Ordered many dresses, which I cannot bear doing as it is so extravagant. . . ."

Nevertheless, as is often the case, another time we get just the opposite sentiments :

"Annie and I went out riding. Most enjoyable. Had nice, new habits which were very smart and dashing. Wrong to say so, but a new habit is not unpleasant. . . ."

An entry in Lady de Rothschild's journal sums up the various activities of the London seasons in which she and her daughters participated :

"... Summer rushing on and all whirling, bustling, changing around us—tragedy, burlesque, drama, pantomime, all in order. . . ."

They attended various receptions and had many interesting guests, distinguished in the worlds of society, politics or music.

In Constance's diaries, however, there are but few graphic descriptions of festivities, though there were times when she evidently had a surfeit of them. She exclaims :

"Have quite come to the conclusion that I do not care for balls. I am really too old" [she was then twenty-five] "and have now too many other thoughts and interests."

She is more enthusiastic over music and concerts.

"Could not settle down to anything properly. We were in a great state of expectation. At last Joachim came with his beauty and his charm. He has entirely and completely fascinated me. . . ."

"After lunch, went to hear the great Rubinstein play. It was wonderful, stupendous ; we were all amazed. . . ."

"A most curious day ! I cannot well forget it. Joachim made a mistake. He came the wrong day, to our



CONSTANCE AND ANNIE DE ROTHSCHILD

From a picture at Anthony Hall

horror. We were all setting out for Gunnersbury. We drove off and Mamma and Miss Molique¹ stayed. Oh, our feelings! I thought of him all day long. I returned with quite a palpitation. He was charming and we had such an evening. He interests me. . . .”

“ . . . Joachim was quite charming, pleasanter than ever. I was so *very, very* sorry to see him depart. . . .”

In 1863 Constance goes over to Paris with her father to visit her relations and sees the Emperor and Empress in all their glory at the Tuileries. She writes to her mother :

“ . . . Is it not a pity, I left the Tuileries one moment too soon. Papa and I abandoned our companions just as the Imperial couple were walking into supper. We saw them pass and then left the palace, I being really most anxious to get Papa away for he looked quite knocked up and I was afraid of the gout. The Empress stopped when she came to Laurie,² spoke to her and then turned to Evy³ and shook hands with her. They followed them into the supper room where the Emperor and Empress came up again and talked to Laurie and Evy for about twenty minutes.

“ The Emperor admired Evy’s bouquet and asked her where it came from. ‘ De mon beau frère.’ ‘ Tous les beaux frères ne sont pas si galants,’ was the answer. The Empress, with a wonderful intuition, asked Evy for what reason she had been to Bordeaux five years ago. Is it not wonderful what memories royalties are blessed with ?

“ I was very much amused at the ball although I did not come in for these bon-bons at the end, the [scene ?] was beautiful and whilst I was dancing I could look most comfortably at the Empress who was really a triumph of art, because she was all painted just like a picture. . . .”

She is not impressed, however, by the appearance

¹ Daughter of the composer and violinist, herself a pianist.

² Constance’s cousin, Leonora de Rothschild.

³ “ Laurie’s ” sister.

of the Emperor, as in another letter she writes:

"... Aunt Betty [Baroness James] is in wonderful spirits, she is so enchanted with M. Thiers, his speech, so Alphonse says, has made her 25 years younger. At present the Emperor thinks of nothing but skating, I saw him yesterday on the ice with his little son. His I.M. is a most hideous fright, but the Prince I. is a little duck.

"I wish Annie could see the skating, she would make such a pretty drawing of it. I am quite cracked about it...."

It is not long before various young men cross the stage. Constance's heart is easily fluttered, and her spirits rise high and then fall to low depths when the flirtation dwindles, or when the suitor is not eligible. A young Lord, an attractive curate (brother of an ambassador), and rather later on an old Russian diplomatist, are among her admirers. Matters are complicated by differences of religion. She ejaculates:

"How extraordinary it would be if we all married Christians."

But, knowing that such marriages would be disapproved of, she went through many emotions; it is rather pathetic when she can finally say:

"One great thing—I have discovered we may marry whom we like—there is no limit put upon us, we are quite free, like other girls."

Marriage without her parents' permission never seems to have crossed her mind. She talks of her mother, "white as a ghost," with her anxieties over her daughters' future.

In the summer of 1865 a welcome diversion; the two girls went to Ireland with their father and

wrote their mother graphic accounts of the haphazard life in the great houses, adding :

" Now good-bye, my dear Mamma, pray do *eat and drink* ; ethereal as you are, you have got a body ; you seem to forget it."

In these letters we see the jolly baronet, coming down, as Annie describes him :

" in his velveteen, looking, our lively host said, like a large cup of chocolate,"

and entering as fully as his children into the fun of the somewhat casual life and generous hospitality of the country ; we see the postboys refusing to go because they had been scolded on the previous day, so that the party is unable to reach the destination where a lavishly prepared repast is awaiting them ; and we watch the vivacious peasant girls dancing in the open, or begging among the mountains. It is a vivid picture of the Ireland of seventy years ago. Annie writes :

" The Irish are *ducks* ; we are already in love with them. All the men have a funny goodnatured humourous expression about the mouth which reminds one strikingly of Boucicault.¹

" To Connie's despair there is a melancholy scarcity of beggars, and she has only seen one till now who quite comes up to her beau ideal and has an unlimited number of rags. They give us hopes, however, of seeing better specimens of this Irish production in the South. Constance is quite in love with the waiter who is over-flowing with Irish blarney, and is the softest most amiable creature under the sun.

" KILLARNEY : . . . The Herberts have a charming house. . . . They are very much liked here, and spite of their being Protestants are evidently much preferred to their Catholic neighbours. . . ."

¹ The actor.

They then visit Viscount Castlerosse at Killarney, where Sir Anthony, with his love of foreign parts, considers that the lake

“ requires a few habitations like on the foreign lakes, but I think some Swiss Chalet, or Italian villa would be as much out of place here as an Irish cabin on the banks of Como or Lucerne.

“ Yesterday we toddled about the town, which is particularly dirty, but made very amusing by the crowds of picturesque peasants all so gay and good humoured and chaffy. . . . After a sumptuous lunch given to us by the amiable Viscount [Castlerosse] he took us a drive round his lovely grounds, and then a long row in a very nice large boat. All his men were most elegantly attired in white, with large belts and buckles, and coloured handkerchiefs hanging from them ; they were very jolly and cheery and sang us a great many songs ; the song which was immortalized in the Colleen Bawn is a great favourite and they sing it with great spirit ; but there is generally something melancholy and sentimental. Our dear guide particularly has an amount of feeling and sentiment in his voice which would not disgrace a Mario, or rather a Gardoni. You cannot imagine anything more romantic than the somewhat melancholy songs of the boatmen or the sound of the bugle which our accomplished guide plays to perfection, echoing among the mountains.”

After this they visit the Bernal Osbornes at Newtown Anner, where Annie describes a cattle show :

“ I believe the Show was a very good one, as such the connoisseurs declared it to be. There were some dear little cows, such ducks. Papa would have bought one, were we not afraid of importing any cattle just now. . . . It was rather humiliating that his only purchase was a pig ! There was a very good show of human animals, and neighbours from far and near flocked to see four legged and two legged notabilities.”

Annie writes of the appearance of the Lord Lieutenant at a ball at Clonmel :

" . . . The Lord-Lieutenant, Lady and suite arrived early ; there was an absurd little elevation with three (much criticised) dining-room chairs, for their Vice R.H.S. and a friend. Certainly the Vice-Regal post is a most absurd one. How and why should there be any loyalty or enthusiasm for people that are suddenly invested with regal authority, and are nobodies after spending four hours on the steamer. It requires more abstract reasoning than can be made use of by the mass to be always remembering that the respect is due not to the individual, but to the representative of English authority. Lord Wodehouse seems very amiable and unaffected ; he is a very good-looking likeness of the Curries, reminding me most in face and manner of our little friend the clergyman. He conversed with me and I was rather taken with His Excellency."

Constance is charmed with a dance among the peasants, adding :

" They remind me very much of the Italians, more than any other nation. . . .

" As for Annie [she continues], she has now arrived at that stage when company manners have disappeared for ever. Lord Henry¹ has been in convulsions ever since he has been here, between Annie and Mr Osborne. . . . Edith and Grace² have not the least idea of propriety, and say the most extraordinary things with great *sang-froid*."

There is a description of an expedition to the Waterfords at Curraghmore.

" . . . The entrance into this Irish Chateau is peculiar and grand ; on each side of the house the stables form two long wings in the middle of which the house rises, this might be made into a very fine court. The drawing rooms

¹ Lord Henry Gordon Lennox.

² The future Duchess of St. Albans.

are pretty and comfortable and contain some good pictures, but everywhere there is too apparent a sign of the eccentricity and stinginess of the proprietor. The horses that inhabit the most luxurious stables are thin and miserable looking; the roads are badly kept, the railings and gates wretched, and the lodges would not be suffered to exist by the humblest English Squire.

"The cabins look wretched—fancy *one* room for a whole family to spend their whole lives, nights and days, in; is it not shocking? One cannot imagine how such strong hale creatures can come out of such horrid hovels."

Of Lismore they write :

"The castle is very fine and there is a most charming court of great architectural beauty. The interior, however, seems very gaudily decorated. We all hated the Duke of Devonshire from that moment, as he only remains a week during the year on his Irish abode—we all thought his possessing it quite sinful, and wished by some piece of heavenly luck it might come to us!!!"

Constance is much attracted by Lady Bessborough :

"... I think you would like her extremely, she is so natural and clever. She is quite devoted to her poor people. Indoors she works shawls and waistcoats for them, and out of doors she spends her time in visiting them. It is really interesting to see her village, consisting of clean pretty little cottages, as unlike as possible to the cabins of the other poor. She dresses herself as plainly as possible, to give away all she can. Lord Henry is always laughing at her about her toilettes, and says she looks like a dear good housekeeper. Yesterday morning she took us to see her work school. . . .

"They all shake hands with her and are much more demonstrative and *sans-gêne* than our English poor."

The following day she writes with enthusiasm of Lord Lismore, whose guests they are at Shanbally Castle :

"Our host is *delightful*; I have made him several declarations; he is the essence of goodness. You should hear him talk to the poor people; he is such a courteous Irishman, and they all adore him about here. He has a capital school of 170 children, and he occasionally goes and inspects himself. All the Irish schools are free. Every child in the parish thinks it a duty to go. Education is infinitely higher among the poor here than in England. They are taught history and geography, and the boys learn a little mathematics. Lord Lismore has a passion for animals; he has an enormous, coal black cat with bright yellow eyes. This creature sits next to him at breakfast and dinner, and after a great deal of embracing is given a plate of grouse. He is Lord Lismore's faithful attendant and travels everywhere with his master. Lord Henry's horror is this cat. He always feels when it is in the room. . . ."

Finally there comes a description of a very pleasant day at Cork :

"We went to the butter market which is carried on on an enormous scale and with great method; enormous pailsful are dispatched to America and to different parts of the kingdom. It was very pretty to see all the peasants bringing their pails, gesticulating and jabbering like Italians. The Irish are all so courteous that we found innumerable numbers of people to explain it to us. The butter Inspector was a most polite little man. We then proceeded to the new Cathedral, where we could find nothing worth seeing but some foundations for a new building, and a little old Archdeacon who was superintending it; he rushed up to my father [Lady Battersea continued in an article based on these letters] exclaiming: 'Anthony Rothschild! It can be no other—och! to meet you here!' We were indeed puzzled. 'And, do you not know me?' continued Father Martin, 'why, I knew your father, the old Rothschild when he was at Manchester with Behrens; my father lived in that city too, where we were all brought up, and you are the image of your father—it must be *you*!' And to our amaze-

ment Father Martin was duly recognised by our father, and was asked to jump up on the car to be our cicerone for the rest of the drive. He took us to a rival building which is also rising. It was very funny to be gadding about Cork with an Archdeacon, and still more so when we paraded the Protestant edifice with a dignitary of each faith. The jolly old Priest and the member of the Anglican Church were capital friends, and there did not seem to be any feelings of jealousy between them. At parting Papa drew from the recesses of his pocket a purse, and offered each of our companions a bank note, leaving them, I think, as well pleased as he had been with that strange encounter."

The Anglican minister proved to be the celebrated Dr. Magee, a future Archbishop of York. Lady Battersea delighted to tell of this genial company of Jew, Protestant and Roman Catholic as an example of her father's good nature and friendliness.

During this year, 1865, her lively, good-hearted cousin, Evy, married Ferdinand de Rothschild, only to die in 1866. Constance's little diary contains the following entries :

"DECEMBER 4th, 1866. Evy's death. O shocking, sad day! It seems almost impossible to write about it. And yet it took place. We were happy, merry, even joking, without the slightest thought of such a terrible event. It almost now seems to me impossible.

"DECEMBER 5th: Sadder even than the day before. Coming up to London and reading that terrible message in the paper. It was enough to arrive all trembling with fear and anguish. The house, all dark and shut up, confirmed our unhappy fear. And then, the sight of the mourners—oh, it went to my heart. Saw the bedroom, that gay, bright room with the motionless form on the bed, with the poor, tiny baby on the sofa. Oh, what a sight.

"DECEMBER 7th: Poor Evy's funeral!

" DECEMBER 10th : At Piccadilly in the afternoon for prayers. How different were the guests to those usually assembled there.

" DECEMBER 11th : In the afternoon, Doctor Kalisch made a little discourse, which was so touching and so pathetic that it must have moved everyone who heard it.

" DECEMBER 31st : How many loved ones have left us, how many are gone ! "

Of her Gunthersburg cousins, Addy was already settled in Paris as the widow of Solomon de Rothschild, who had died in 1864 after only two years of married life, and Emmy was engaged to Natty¹ whom she married in 1867. Just a month after Lady Rothschild's marriage, Constance writes in her journal :

" Emmy came to see us, dear Emmy, looking bright and rosy and happy. She has indeed a bright lot before her, a loving and adoring husband, anxious to do her pleasure, a family eager to receive her, a new country, full of interest and happiness."

And when her first son² is born the following year, Constance ejaculates :

" . . . Dear Emmy, may you be a very happy mother ; may you have a harvest of rich rejoicing. . . . "

During these years Constance complains a good deal of her health, and her spirits seem to fluctuate considerably. This was, indeed, characteristic of her throughout her life : "*Himmel hoch jauchzend, zum Tode betrübt.*"

On all their many trips abroad the Rothschilds did not fail to visit their cousins in the foreign countries through which they passed. On a journey through Switzerland in 1867 there is a

¹ Afterwards the first Lord Rothschild.

² The present Lord Rothschild.

description in Lady de Rothschild's journal of a visit to Pregny near Geneva, the home of her cousin, Adolphe Karl de Rothschild, and of his wife Julia.

"... Yesterday went to Pregny. Rather disappointed with the house, though it contains beautiful works of art and some very comfortable rooms, but there is a want of harmony in the whole of it—the exterior is rather heavy—in the arrangement of the rooms there is a great deal of taste and originality, but there is a want of order in their distribution, and rather a medley of style in their furniture and ornaments. . . ."

"... Dined at Pregny. Gave me the idea of the chateau of some prince in a novel; music, fireworks, elegance, comfort and luxury, life seen in its holiday dress—art, pleasure, beauty and refinement! . . ."

"... Adolphe and Julia untiring in their endeavours to entertain us, and they fully succeeded in giving us a very merry evening, which I think Connie and Annie enjoyed extremely."

In 1869 Constance and Annie paid their first visit to Italy, accompanied by their mother and Thackeray's daughter, Annie (later Lady Ritchie) the authoress, of whom Lady de Rothschild writes:

"... We have a charming travelling companion whom we are ever finding and losing like the fluttering sunshine, dancing in and out of the clouds. . . ."

A letter to Sir Anthony from Miss Thackeray gives a charming picture, not only of the land they were visiting, but also of her three companions.

"Palazzo Barberini.

"14 March.

"DEAR SIR ANTHONY,

"I have been wanting to write to you every day since

Lady de Rothschild told me I might, for I could not help wanting to tell you how very, very, very kind they have all been to me and how enormously we have all in our own ways—at least I speak for myself—and judge from appearances for them—enjoyed our expedition. It all goes by in a beautiful bewildering sort of mirage, Gods and Goddesses and light and pictures and the past and a beautiful golden present. Everyone is kind—doors fly open, carriages come and carry one off and the hills grow so purple and lovely that sometimes one can hardly look at them. It seems too much. Yesterday at Albano I got fairly dazed, it was so unexpectedly wide and sweet and charming—we came home along the via Sacra in a sunset, with flowers in among the tombs and dear pretty little children starting up out of the ground like their forefathers. I never saw Lady de Rothschild and Constance and Annie looking better than they did when they started. I went to lunch with them the last day—and as usual whenever we meet—the clouds come and the rain begins to fall. They had changed their first rooms for a grand duke, the last time I saw them, and at our entreaty have gone up high under the roof at Naples. I believe that there is a determined spite between this place and Naples, and whoever is ill here is said to have caught the fever at Naples whether they have been there or not, and vice versa. Every true Roman-spirited citizen entreats travellers by every means to remain and go no farther. For my part I should like to stay here for two or three hundred years. I don't think it would be too much to see all that is to be seen and read and explored. Everything is interesting. Even here in my own room I see a painted frescoed ceiling, a stone balcony, a marble roofed palace, a classical statue is sewing for me in a corner—I need not tell you how much coming with Lady de Rothschild added to my pleasure. I do not think anybody knows how to be so kind to other people as she is, and Constance and Annie are so bright, dear and understanding. It makes a most delightful travelling party, and it seems hard that you can only see it all upon paper—but I hope you will soon be coming.

" Mr Russell and Lady Emily and a number of people are coming so I must finish—I can't help saying thank you for all the kindness I have had from your family and believe me, dear Sir Anthony,

" Yours sincerely,

" ANNIE THACKERAY."

Throughout this journey Annie de Rothschild is pursued by an Italian Marquis. Lady de Rothschild favours his suit, and the soft-hearted Constance arranges meetings between the young people. Luckily Annie's heart does not appear to have been much engaged, for when Papa hears of it and has " a consultation with his brother," the poor Marquis is forced to retire from the scene. It is typical of Constance to say :

" V. looked so miserable that he made me feel sad."

Lady de Rothschild and her daughters delighted in foreign travel, and they were enraptured by what they saw on this Italian trip ; but, except for an occasional description of people, there is not much that is distinctive enough to quote. Constance writes :

" Off by the night train for the South and the magic of that word, South ! It was enough to make the travelers dance with ecstasy. What a happy little party they were in the train. Not one discordant element. That night arrived at Cannes, our first glimpse of the South."

" . . . I was the first to see St. Peter's, gave a great shriek of delight. I could not actually believe myself to be in Rome, it seemed too delightful. We have magnificent apartments in the Corso in a very large hotel. I rested for a few hours, then we rushed off to St. Peter's. I felt astonished and bewildered. I could hardly believe that it was I, my very self, walking in St. Peter's. . . ."

Lady de Rothschild writes in her journal :

"... I think it would have been impossible for me to express the admiration and astonishment with which Rome inspires one or to describe the effect produced by its contrasts of ruins and palaces, of its crowded streets and the solitary Campagna around it, with its relics of a past age and its girdle of mountains lovely in form and colour, which looked down upon ancient Rome and seem to be so calmly and coldly gazing upon the modern city."

His daughters pour out their enthusiasm in frequent letters to their father. Annie writes :

"As we were driving quietly along, Frank suddenly informed us that His Holiness the Pope was coming ! So the carriage stopped and we hastened out and made low curtsies, whilst everyone else, coachman included, devoutly knelt as His H., followed by other dignitaries of the Church, and also by a guard of soldiers, passed. He is a good-natured, benevolent looking old man. Connie and I were rather disappointed with his attire which we expected to have been very grand. With the exception of a red hat and red slippers, it is exactly like—what do you think—a certain *négligé* costume in which you ascend the stairs at Aston Clinton before going to bed. The famous Antonelli¹ was one of his companions, and I had just time to admire his very handsome and imposing countenance. . . "

The following letter gives a description of Easter in Rome in the days of the papal glory :

"Friday 26th.

"Yesterday was considered a very great holy day in Rome, all the shops were shut and the bells were ringing from morning till night. At eleven o'clock we drove to the Piazza of St. Peter, we went at a foot's pace all the way. The streets were lined with people and there were numbers of ladies walking along in their black dresses with veils on their heads. That is also our costume for the ceremonies. As we approached the Piazza the crowd

¹ Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at the Vatican.

became tremendous, but a Roman crowd is quiet, orderly and dignified. You hear very little speaking or laughing, and there is no pushing and jostling. The coachmen are so good-tempered and merry, and there is perfect order without any policemen.

"When we arrived before St. Peter's, the sight was wonderful. In the centre of the Piazza were drawn up all the Papal troops, the mounted guard with drawn swords lined the way, round the soldiers crowded the people, and the carriages were all surrounding the spectators. The centre balcony of St. Peter's was hung with velvet, a huge canopy was visible from the distance, there stood a number of cardinals, and at last appeared the Pope with his gold crown and in his magnificent robes. There was a complete and perfect silence, the Pope read his absolution and then put out his hands and blessed the people. At that moment the whole crowd knelt, and not a sound was heard. As soon as the Pope withdrew his hands, the cannons thundered, there was a burst of trumpets and the bells of St. Peter began to ring.

"It was really a wonderfully imposing spectacle. . . ."
". . . We went back to St. Peter's, where we met Mama. The church would have been quite dark, had it not been for the lights glimmering before the altars. There were crowds and crowds of people kneeling everywhere and walking up and down. The ceremony we saw performed was the washing of the Altar. There was a procession of Monsignori and priests. They carried lighted torches in one hand and in the other a little mop. Slowly they paced down St. Peter's, the torches throwing a lurid light upon all the people, until they came to the altar, where a prayer was said, incense wafted, and the altar well washed and scrubbed with the mops. When we left the church it was still full of people.

"The night before last I went with Mlle Galimberti to see the Roman ladies wash the Pilgrims' feet and serve them at supper. It was a very curious sight.

"I hope, dear Papa, that you are quite well and that the weather is improving in England. This morning it is lovely, there is such a blue sky and a bright sun.

"Rome is delightful, perfectly delightful.

"Goodbye dear Papa, I am just going to breakfast. This evening we munch our biscuits with M. Alatry."

In spite of being dazzled by the grandeur of a Roman Easter, they did not forget their Jewish Passover. I quote from entries in Constance's journal :

MARCH 26th, 1869.

"... It seemed so strange instead of driving quickly and simply through Piccadilly to go through the long, narrow streets of Rome. Found the youthful Alatry awaiting us. We got out and walked along to the Ghetto through a seemingly cut-throat place. Stopped at last at a good-sized house. A light was brought to the door and disclosed a long, steep staircase, two candles were held high up for us. We mounted the steps and arrived in a tiny little room, where three ladies sat round a diminutive table. Madame Jacob Alatry, very fat, very short, with a handsome face and fine eyes and long black lashes. Madame Marco Alatry, very plain, and Miss Solomon, rather dirty. Then appeared Madame Alatry, who looked as if she had a bad stomach ache. Oh, what a long sober evening! I thought it would never end, the prayers were gabbled, the cooking was endless, and the dinner was lengthy. Conversation was fragmentary in Italian, French and English. Monsieur Alatry was constantly washing his hands. We left after the coffee. . . . What a strange, curious evening!"

"MARCH 27th: Received a telegram from Papa. Had not received our letters. We were much annoyed, but the post must be irregular on account of the holy days. Read our prayers devoutly all the morning, then had a run with Annie. . . ."

"APRIL 2nd: A Passover holy day, so we could not run about, so read our prayers quietly. . . . In the evening drove to the Palazzo Mattei, where we were met by the two Alatrys. We set off with them and promenaded down into the Synagogue, where there were streams and streams of people, going out, coming in, filling every corner and passage. In this extraordinary building,

under one roof there were five synagogues. The eldest is the most curious and the most beautiful. It is supported on marble pillars. Every synagogue is quite different. I was much interested. Had two enemies after dinner, Prince Altier and the Marquis, they never spoke."

In these days of the Fascist *régime* it is curious to read of Sir Anthony's fears when Constance writes of a trip to Sorrento :

"Set off on our expedition with great and terrible misgivings. Papa had told us not to go out of Rome and we were actually going to do so. We all had visions at Castellamare of turning back, but gave it up as it was too absurd. The road to Sorrento was as frequented as the Chioja. . . ."

At last their stay came to an end :

"APRIL 19th : Our last day at Rome. How melancholy I was at so sad a thought. The weather was fine, the sky was blue and we determined upon Ostia and Castel Cusano. The poor Marquis was delighted. It was his long looked for occasion to have another talk with Annie. I quite dread our return. What will Papa say ! We had a bevy in the evening, Baron Visconti, M. Alatry, Marquis Calabrin and our Marquis.

"APRIL 20th : What a sad day, bidding good-bye to Rome. I was awake at five, and out in the Pincio at seven. We were all of us miserable and at that last moment would have given everything to have unpacked our boxes and stayed another week at Rome but alas it was not to be. There was the Marquis, looking pale and miserable. Poor man, he would probably not be able to come to Florence. Arrived tired at Pisa.

"APRIL 21st : Alas, we were at Pisa instead of at Rome. . . . What did I care about the Leaning Tower ? Sickening object ! It only gave me cramp in my legs and a vertigo in my brain. Pisa is a bore, Rome is adorable. Doomed to disappointment. Feel lunatic !!! Poor 'C.' I just find that I begin with the same initial which

is a comfort. May I see the Coliseum again! This sounds stupid but to me it is very sad."

There are descriptions of visits to their Italian cousins, and on their way home, they are entertained, as usual, by their French relations :

"MAY 2ND: Family visits as usual from morning till night, found Addy looking well and in good spirits, Aunt Louisa waited for us, dear, good creature."

In the autumn of the same year they visited Austria, and Lady de Rothschild writes in her journal :

"SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4th: . . . In the afternoon, went to see Joachim and found him and his wife in a large, old fashioned room with more windows than chairs—overlooking a lovely scene of meadowland, winding river and ranges of mountains.

"Joachim was charming: offered us music as simply as another host might have given us coffee—and soon we had a delightful little concert. Joachim played divinely and his wife sang extremely well. A pianist and a painter appeared, then the four little Joachims—and after some conversation we separated—but only to meet an hour later at St. Jacob's Village, perched in a green dell high up above Salzburg, to which tourists climb to see the sunset. We arrived a moment too late—the sun had set and the glow had faded from the face of the rocks—but the scene was beautiful."

In December Constance and her sister went on a visit to Lord and Lady Leicester at Holkham, where the Prince and Princess of Wales¹ and their children were among their fellow-guests. I quote some of the graphic and amusing letters which Lady de Rothschild received from her daughters while they were on this visit.

¹ Afterwards King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra.

The first two of these Lady Battersea herself quoted in her *Reminiscences* :

Annie to Lady de Rothschild.

“ Holkham.

“ Tuesday, Dec. 1869.

“ DEAREST MAMMA,

“ Here we are, actually arrived at our long journey's end, which really did seem a very long way off. Our carriage was stunning, resembling that magnificent vehicle in which we went from Turin to Susa, so that Papa could take exercise and recreation in the shape of a cigar with ease and comfort.

“ Our grandeur excited much attention on the line, and, as the prince was expected, eager eyes gazed into our carriage and looked rather disgusted at what they saw. At Cambridge we had such an excellent lunch that I could hardly believe we were in our native country, and thus reinforced toddled on in the slowest of slow trains, the aspect of the country becoming simply Siberian, large snow drifts on either side of the train, huge white fields, tree-less and hedgeless, and over all such a cold grey sky. Norfolk struck us all as being hideous, and even Buckinghamshire, the much abused, would look comfortable after this dreary landscape.

“ Arrived at the station, we found grand preparations for royalty in the shape of red cloth and Lord Leicester who looked as red as the cloth ; but jolly and good-natured ; and, thank goodness, carts of all dimensions, in which our box could sit without any inconvenience. We had only preceded the royal train by a half an hour, and found all the party at home in great expectation. There were only the family, but *only* ! for besides Lady Dunmore and Lady Powerscourt, and our nice giantess Lady Anne, there are four younger female members and two boys ; all of these made quite a considerable group, but not an alarming one as they are very simple and goodnatured. When we had begun to thaw a little mentally and bodily, the bell rang, and the great people arrived. The two little boys toddled in first with great

self possession, followed by the Princess, who looked very duckish, and His R.H. in apparently a very good temper. The other ladies are only Mrs. Grey and Countess Gleichen. The gentlemen are Mr. Chaplin, Mr. T. de Grey, Mr. Dyke, and a Mr. Macdonald. The Princess came down to dinner in a high lilac dress, looking very pretty. She is very simple and good-natured, and I should think up to a great deal of fun, but does not look clever and does not originate much in the way of conversation ; she is decidedly deafish, and often answers *à tort et à travers*. I have not seen much of her royal spouse, so we still remain faithful to our old friend, George !¹ The Prince declares that we stuffed his cousin to such an extent that we gave him the gout. Mrs. Grey is charming ; she is a Swede and talks English with a pretty little accent. I sat next to Mr. Chaplin at dinner and we got on very well together, he is good-natured and sensible, if not brilliant. His guests threw him over, so he might have come to us last week. Imagine my horrible brass, when I tell you that I actually sat down to play last night, happily convinced that there was no one present that would be much the worse for a false note. A pleasant hum of conversation crowned my efforts and kept up my nerves. We all retired early, as everyone was tired after the journey. Our bed-rooms are on the ground floor, those generally given to bachelors ; they are large and comfortable, but neither bright or elegant, and resembling very much the bed-rooms of an old fashioned English inn.

“ Good-bye, dear Mamma, give my best love to all at Worth, and believe me

“ Your most aff.

“ ANNIE. ”

Annie to Lady de Rothschild.

“ Holkham.

“ Wednesday, Dec. 1869.

“ DEAREST MAMMA,

“ I take advantage of a few moments before breakfast to send you a little account of our proceedings. Holkham

¹ The Duke of Cambridge.

time is exactly a half an hour in advance of the ordinary time, so that we are in reality almost as early as you are at Worth. This funny arrangement gives one the impression of being in another country; we had a lovely day yesterday, very cold and bright; all the gentlemen went at an early hour to business, but the ladies were lazy, and would not go out before lunch. The Princess appeared at 1 o'clock, looking duckish in a short black velvet costume. In the afternoon those least humane, including myself, drove to see the gentlemen shooting. The poor pheasants rose in the air in such numbers that they quite blackened the sky; and tumbled about all round us. Mrs. Grey and I were quite disgusted, so we walked home at my usual pace; she is a very nice little woman, and introduces an idea of foreign *sans gêne* and vivacity which is rather necessary here. They are all very kind and friendly, but many of the members of the family do not contribute much to the general hilarity. Lady Anne is by far the nicest of the family, she is really very clever and jolly; her great topic, though, is theology, and she is at present deep in Josephus! The other four are all more or less shy, though they are nice amiable little things. Of course the Princess gives a little stiffness to the proceeding, particularly because she is too deaf to join much in general conversation, and requires some one always to talk to her. She is excessively goodnatured and not at all alarming. We were very jolly in the evening, and danced in a charming long gallery. The schoolmaster, a most elegant looking gentleman, played for us, with much success. We danced in a manner which would have delighted Laurie, without any of the decorum of which she complained at Mentmore; their R.Hs. like nothing so much as a romp; in more loyal language they have a great deal of '*entrain*'; Papa was very frisky, and danced so well that the Princess invited him to dance the lancers with her; and under the royal tuition got on very well. There was only one valtz played, but none of the ladies besides ourselves were given to valtzing; the Prince and I had a capital valtz together, during which time I conversed about the smallness of Aston Clinton House. We concluded with a '*tempête*' which was worthy of its

name. The St. Albans appeared late last night. She is looking very pretty, and is quite as pleasant as her looks. The royal babies came in to be looked at yesterday afternoon ; they are very nice little boys, rather wild, but not showing signs of being too much spoiled ; they make very ludicrous attempts at being dignified and, so they say, talk of each other as Prince George and Prince Victor.

" There is no shooting to-day, so I hope and trust we shall have a good long walk. The sea is only within two miles and I have a great wish to pay him a visit. I have just discovered the great failing of this establishment ; there is not one dog, nothing wagging or barking. The Princess generally brings hers among her numerous retinue, but has just lost an old favourite. Imagine that they bring *twelve* men servants ; is it not dreadful.

" Good-bye, dear Mamma, the post has not yet come in, but I suppose it will bring us some news of you.

" Ever yours devotedly,
" ANNIE."

Constance to Lady de Rothschild.

" Yesterday she [the Princess] asked Annie to play the piano with her, and they went on for an hour and a half ; she plays well and likes it. Meanwhile I had a fearful romp with the little princes, we taught them blind man's buff and ran races with them. The eldest is a beautiful child, the image of the Princess, the second has a jolly little face and looks the cleverest. The Princess said to me, ' they are dreadfully wild, but I was just as bad.'

" Annie, Mrs Grey and I walked out yesterday afternoon in all the snow and cold ; everyone else drove, but Mrs. Grey is a famous walker equal to Annie. We are great friends. I am sure you would like her, she is so nice and jolly. She confided to me that she and the Princess had agreed they ought to have a few young men here like Harry Bourke. The noisy ones are noisy but not clever. Annie Coke is by far the nicest of the family, we all think so. She is very good-natured and bright. Last evening I sat next to the Duke of St. Albans who is a serious, rational creature and has much improved. We wanted to gamble in the evening, but the Prince did not seem to care for it

and came and asked us to play again, which we did in a bold way. He is not a bit musical but he likes a noise, and Lady Leicester says we help the conversation. We went to bed at half *past ten* ! which the Princess hates ; she cannot bear to go to bed early, and when everyone is saying good night begins to talk again.

" To-night we have a servants' ball and everybody predicts that Morrell is to have a great success with His Royal Highness. Papa told him we had such a pretty maid, and he has constituted himself judge whether she is the prettiest in the room. There are two pipers here, so of course we shall have reels, which the Prince, so he told me, delights in. They would not hear of our going to-morrow before the romps. We are to have blind man's buff, tapping hands, snapdragon, &c., &c. The Princess is as wild as she can be and delights in games.

" Goodbye, dear Mamma. I must rush to breakfast. Yours with many loves.

" CONSTANCE.

" The Duchess of St. Albans is a delicious creature. I told her husband I was in love with her ! "

Constance's journal, in 1871, gives a very different description of the Gunthersburg from that of twelve years before :

" . . . How the Gunthersburg is changed ; Addie with her child, Thésie engaged, Hannah Louise like an old woman, Margy a blooming, grown-up girl."

(The two last were younger sisters of Addie and Thésie. " Margy " married the Duc de Grammont in 1878.)

This was written while Constance was staying with her cousins on her way to Oberammergau. She was tremendously impressed by her first visit to the Passion Play. She speaks of Joseph Mayer, who then played the leading figure, as :

" A noble man, full of honesty and evidently beloved and respected by the people."

And she goes on to say :

“ The men all performed well ; the women were very mediocre.”

She ends :

“ So the Passion Play is played and ended, and the Greek chorus becomes Bavarian peasants, and the old Hebrews have turned into modern Germans, and the holy men return to their rustic tasks. . . .”

On this tour we find in her journals almost her earliest allusion to “ Mr. Flower,” her future husband, who was travelling with one of her cousins, Leopold de Rothschild.

CHAPTER VII

1861-1878

Public events : Death of the Prince Consort—Second Reform Bill—Austro-Prussian War—Franco-Prussian War—Berlin Congress—Sir Eric Barrington

IN the little diaries and letters we trace again how the family was affected by public events at home and abroad.

We learn of Prince Albert's death on December 16th, 1861 :

" . . . What a loss for the Court and the nation, so active, so good, so gracious. . . . The patron of so many arts, the husband of the Queen, the father of the future King. All petty misfortunes seem to melt into nothing. . . . We could think of nothing else ; it gave us all terrible headaches. . . ."

Three days later finds them still unable to forget the sorrow that has come upon their Queen :

" . . . We could think of nothing but poor Prince Albert. . . . I am not very loyal ; I do not care much about royalties, but his is the loss of a great and a good man."

" The poor Prince's death made Mamma feel quite ill, she has so much heart and sympathy."

In 1867 she refers to the scene in the House of Commons after the passing of the Second Reform Bill :

" APRIL 12th : Dined at Hyde Park Gardens and went to

the House. Oh, I shall never forget the scene. The interest was intense, and then, the noise, the cheers, the shrieks. It was deafening. . . .”

Regarding public affairs we hear how, in the troubled year of 1866, in May :

“ Papa came home in a most fearful state ; great panic¹ in the City, things are in a dangerous state, trouble and gloom over everything. . . .”

And, on July 5th :

“ *Such great news.* Peace, and Venice free. Enough to make the heart swell with joy.”

That same summer Baroness Charles’s letters from Frankfort tell of the Austrian invasion : of men and officers quartered in their farm, and thousands of troops going through Frankfort ; and she ejaculates :

“ War ! dreadful, cruel iniquitous war, brought about by the ambition of one man and execrated by whole populations.”

And on July 14th she is still more anxious, saying that the poor Frankforters were in fear for their beloved city. Her time has been almost entirely taken up by working for the wounded—a volunteer corps of fifty men is leaving for Aschaffenburg, each bearing a little lantern to seek out the wounded on the field of battle.

Two days after this letter was written, we find in Constance’s journal :

“ Aschaffenburg burnt down, the Prussians marched into Frankfort. How curious all these changes. How they would have interested poor Grandmamma. . . .”

Naturally the Franco-German War of 1870

¹ Overend Gurney failure.

caused great anxiety. In Constance's journal of that year the entry under July 16th begins with the startling announcement: "War declared"; while four days later her Aunt Louisa writes once more to tell of fresh disturbances at Frankfort. July 20th: things grew worse. She writes that if Napoleon were desirous of having a united Germany he could have hit on no better way. There are now neither Prussians, Bavarians, Wurtembergers, nor Frankforters, only Germans.

From her journal Constance's sympathies seem to be mostly on the side of the Germans.

"War tidings, great and terrible sorrow and misery for every one. . . ."

"AUGUST 7th: News of a Prussian victory. Papa rushed up to town. These times of war are most exciting. . . ."

"AUGUST 8th: Great Prussian victories. I cannot help being glad at such signal triumphs. They are the talk of the day. We made up our minds to go to Wales in spite of all.

"Drank tea with Cyril Flower. He has beautiful rooms, very tastefully arranged, and was a nice, bright, jolly host."

On their return from Wales the horrors of war were brought vividly home to them.

"SEPTEMBER 5th. Aston Clinton: I shall write down quite shortly and faithfully what impression the great news made upon me, which I heard on Saturday. Papa proposed taking us to Piccadilly, which I cheerfully assented to, hating it however in reality. When we entered the breakfast room we saw a look of astonishment and partly dismay depicted upon the three faces of Uncle Lionel, Aunt Lionel and Laurie.¹ A fourth person, Mr Bauer, looking gloomy and dark, stood at the table with a telegram

¹ Leonora, eldest daughter of Baron Lionel, who married her cousin Alphonse de Rothschild in 1857.

in his hand. These were the words of the dispatch : ' The Emperor has surrendered himself to the King, and the army of forty thousand men has capitulated.' Poor Laurie felt humiliated like a French-woman. Then came the fear of revolution. She was dark crimson with excitement, and her voice trembled so that she could hardly speak. After a few moments her children came screaming and shouting into the room. They were allowed to make a fearful noise, as no one seemed to mind them. In the midst of their childish voices came the muttered doubts and fears concerning the Empire. In a few moments' time appeared Leopold,¹ then Natty,¹ then Alfred,¹ all with that wondering, dumb-founded, bewildered look and gaze. The little dog, Judy, happy in her ignorance, sat begging on her haunches for bread and the children were counting their pence. Thus the great and the trivial seem to be for ever crossing each other's paths. The day wore on in continued excitement, almost too much to be borne for long.

" War and warlike talk the order of the day, nothing but that, *peu amusant*. It is very awful and horrid and sickening and how will it be averted ? How will the end come ? "

She writes on September 3rd :

" Great, extraordinary news, news to make one's heart beat fast and loud. The reverses of fortune have come and we, who have seen the Emperor great and mighty, now see him laid low. Will there be a revolution in Paris ? What is to happen ? Who can tell ? "

All through September there are references to the war :

" Alas ! We hear of nothing but woe and misery from abroad. No chance of peace, no hope. Mamma looks ill, Papa worried. "

" I read the papers with the greatest interest. I study

¹ Sons of Baron Lionel. " Natty " was the future Lord Rothschild.

the incidents and try to make myself master of the history of the day. The details are perfectly horrid and sickening."

"A telegram with news of the agitation at Ferrières" [the country home of their French cousins].

She sums up :

"During this sad month war has been raging like a fierce demon, people have been tearing themselves to pieces, God's great image has been defaced. And still the cannons roar and the smoke is blinding."

Lady de Rothschild writes in her journal :

"SEPTEMBER 8th, 1870 : The country seems strangely quiet considering all that is going on abroad—war more horrible in this enlightened, civilised age than it has almost ever shown itself. The Emperor a prisoner, the Empire a thing of the past and France a republic. Much alarmed for our relatives at Paris !"

Her alarm for her French cousins, Baron James de Rothschild and his wife Betty, was justified. In January, 1871, the Baroness writes in great depression, saying that provisions are giving out, and that it would be almost criminal to expect the population to continue the struggle, which the whole nation had borne so courageously. She can only hope that a brighter future may await the country.

There is a story that when Baroness James was driving through the streets of Paris during this siege, she was stopped by the populace, who threatened her, and abused her for her luxury. She asked them to follow her, and then showed them that the courtyard of her palace had been converted into a hospital, and that she had been collecting food for the patients.

Lady de Rothschild always spoke affectionately of the French Baroness. She describes a

visit to her in 1849, when she was staying in England :

“ Yesterday we went to St. Leonards to see Betty. . . . [She] was as usual fascinating, eloquent—*tant soit peu exagérée et grande dame*. I found the afternoon’s visit long enough and was not sorry to regain the comparative quiet of the steam carriage, for Betty’s torrent of words and thoughts rather stunned me and made me feel even more stupid than usual. . . . ”

And on her death in 1886 she writes :

“ Poor Aunt Betty after a week of great suffering . . . was taken from the scene where she had during many years played so distinguished and beneficent a part. With her the last of the old Rothschilds had departed, and it is now our generation which is the *old* one. As far as I am concerned, I feel dilapidated rather than old—with various aches and pains, new ones *qui me donnent à penser*, but never mind ! ”

In 1871 Constance writes to her father from Lucerne :

“ . . . The Bleichroders soon appeared, and are in great form and spirits owing to all the Prussian glories. Bismarck is their idol and the Crown Prince their hero. Mr Bleichroder, as you know, went to Versailles in the winter to arrange the money matters with Thiers.

“ When the fabulous sum was first demanded, Thiers exclaimed : ‘ Quite impossible. Why, if you began to count from the time of Jesus Christ and went on until to-day, you could not finish counting out such a sum ! ’ ‘ That is why I have sent for Bleichroder,’ answered Bismarck, ‘ who begins to count from a much older date than Jesus Christ.’ Was not this good ! ” . . .

And Lady de Rothschild, in her journal, gives an interesting account of a conversation with Bleichroder on the following day :

"MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11th: . . . On Sunday morning Mr B. entertained us with stories of Bismarck, the Emperor, Thiers and Jules Lefèvre. He thinks France is preparing for a war of revenge and that Thiers hopes to see it waged whilst he is in power.

"Bismarck much spoilt by the flattery of fortune and all Germany. The Princess extremely clever, an excellent wife and mother, but very capricious and not popular."

In a letter from Sir Eric Barrington to Mrs. Flower, written while he was attending the Berlin Congress, Bismarck reappears :

"Berlin. July 12th, 1878.

"DEAR CONSTANCE,

"You paid me too great a compliment before I left London by saying that I was to write you a letter during the 'Congress Zeit' *to keep*, and I have shown little gratitude hitherto by writing nothing at all. No doubt this will be a period to look back to ; I suppose one may allow that the beginning at least of the settlement of the Eastern Question will date from it, and there is little likelihood of another Congress taking place during our life-time. But we have all been very serious ; there have been no festivities ; only a few small parties and banquets at the different Embassies. There is little to see in Berlin, and the weather has been wet and gloomy nearly the whole while. The Début of the Special Embassy was not brilliant ; for we did not get our luggage till twenty-four hours after our arrival, and had in consequence to attend a state banquet at the Palace, in plumes of all kinds borrowed from our colleagues of the Embassy here who were not invited. Such a favour as allowing us to appear at the Palace even in evening coats would, it is said, never have been accorded by the Crown Prince to any but the English. Probably, if the old Emperor had not been laid up, there would have been numerous entertainments at Court ; but, as it was, we arrived at a time when nearly every one has left Berlin, and the Opera and the good theatres were all closed. The few people who remained have, however, been very kind, and the great men with the exception of Bismarck and Gottschalck have been visible at all the parties.

Bismarck never goes out at night, and in the day time only rarely drives about in a shut carriage. He is in constant fear of assassination and was described aptly to me as the first Prisoner of the State. He is much more likely to die of over-eating, and he has made the state of his health the reason for shirking a good many unpleasant questions in Congress; in fact he has always refused to go into details and has only concerned himself with matters upon which peace or war depended.

“His treatment of the Turks has been most insolent and overbearing. Whenever they open their mouths they are told that they are bringing discord into the Assembly and delaying the progress of business. Each day, poor wretches, they have been lopped of a limb, but it must be remembered that they will be left with far more than in their despair they had agreed to in the Treaty of San Stefano. The appointment of Mehemet Ali, a renegade German, was much commented on here; he always seems cheerful, and is occasionally drunk, in which condition he is apt to give way on questions of vital importance to his adopted country. Poor Catheodory,¹ on the contrary, goes about with what I hope is a ‘figure de circonstance,’ for he looks infinitely more melancholy than any of the real Turks in his suite. He has been permanent Secretary at the Foreign Office for years and has served the Turks well, but he is said to expect instant disgrace on his return. If that is the case I feel for him, for he is very pleasant, and was extremely handsome, though he looks quite broken now. Let us hope that with increased influence over Turkey, since the Cyprus Convention, we shall be able to keep him in Office.

“Schuvaloff has covered himself with glory; he has always been courteous and friendly, and has shown himself to be a wonderful debater. Lord Beaconsfield has been much struck by his power in this respect. *He* has been a great lion here; *the Lion of Judah*! Though Austria may be the only country really satisfied with the decisions of the Congress there is no doubt that he will have made England pre-eminent among the nations. I am sure that

¹ Alexander Catheodory Pasha—Turkish delegate at the Berlin Congress.

those who believe that the English (or Anglo-Saxon race) are the descendants of the lost tribes will consider that with this new acquisition we shall obtain a footing in Asia Minor, which will lead to the recolonization of Palestine and the fulfilment of prophecy! Certainly it is difficult for an imaginative mind to believe that it is by a mere accident at this period that a Jew should be Prime Minister of England. Your people will, I trust, have reason to be grateful to the Congress which has made a great point of the Jewish question in Roumania, Servia, &c., so let us hope that the sufferings to which they have been exposed hitherto will not be a blot on the future of these countries, as they have been upon their past. Though, I am afraid, it is true that the Jews in those regions will not compare favourably with their brethren in the more civilized West, to which you will reply that their vices are the result of oppression, and that the cessation of oppression will result in the gradual disappearance of vice.

. "To-morrow the Treaty is signed and we are given another dinner at the Palace. On Sunday or Monday we shall leave straight for England, and I hope to find you still in Town. People will probably stay to hear the debates in Parliament—the Government defence of what will, I daresay, be but little attacked. I hear that the interest excited in England about Batavia subsided considerably when the Secret Treaty came out.

"Nothing could have been kinder than the Odo Russells since we have been here; they have a beautiful house, and their position is excellent. Lady Odo is adored by everybody. We had a cheery little dance there on Monday to amuse the Salisbury girls, who arrived with their mother last week, but only stopped a few days. Berlin has really no attractions for travellers, and though its Treaty will cut out that of Paris, its appearance never will. There are no shops, no specialities except cloth and iron wire jewelry, a not very ornamental style of decoration, dating from the days of the French invasion when the ladies sold all their ornaments.

"I really must finish this stupid letter now.

"Yours very sincerely,

"ERIC BARRINGTON."

To return to home affairs, the following entries in Constance's diaries show the intense emotion created by the illness of the Prince of Wales, in 1871 :

" DECEMBER 8th : Went early to Town. . . . All in tearing spirits. Suddenly we heard that the Prince was dangerously and fatally stricken. O, the horror of the news, the fearful excitement, the alarm, the consternation. We were all shivering with fear and horror and could talk of nothing else.

" DECEMBER 11th : The Prince *very* ill. We felt quite miserable.

" DECEMBER 15th : The Prince is better. He has turned the corner.

" DECEMBER 16th : The Prince is really going on well. I feel more pleased than I can say. We were in ecstasies."

CHAPTER VIII

1872-1878

*The Yorke Family—Eliot and Annie—Vienna—Friends
—Death of Sir Anthony—Marriages of Lady Battersea and
Lady Rosebery—Death of Eliot Yorke*

DURING the last few years of the 'sixties an intimacy had grown up between Sir Anthony's family and Lord and Lady Hardwicke and their children, John (Lord Royston), Victor, Eliot and Alick Yorke and Lady Agneta Montagu, Lady Mary Craven, and Lady Elizabeth Biddulph, affectionately known as "Libbet" and zealous in the cause of temperance. This eventually led to Annie's engagement to the third son, Eliot, on his return in 1870 from a tour of the Antipodes with the Duke of Edinburgh, whose equerry he was.

As can be imagined, this momentous step was preceded by many difficulties. Constance proved, as usual, a warm ally. Lady Elizabeth seemed no less eager, but the following letters suggest that she probably hoped for Annie's adoption of her husband's faith. Constance writes to her in 1872 :

"We must agree to differ ; and cannot hope for a universal religion, but that need not separate us. I write these things diffusely to you, because you know I am not indifferent. I feel most deeply and my heart warms to the love of God. But all my life long will I battle

against human prejudice and intolerance, and will pray for charity among all men. I am now preparing myself for our fast on Saturday and shall cross-examine myself on that terrible day; I hope that my prayers may be heard and that I shall feel the peace of God descending upon me, when the evening comes and I return exhausted to my room. . . ."

And again :

Constance de Rothschild to Lady Elizabeth Biddulph.

"We are asked to go to a little harvest home next Friday ; Annie is delighted at the idea and said this morning : ' Then I may have the happiness of going into a church with him.' You must not be angry with her, but she says *conversion* is impossible ; she could not begin her married life with a falsehood, but she will do all she can in accordance with his views and would never stand in the way of his religious exercises. And *whenever* he likes she would go and go gladly to church with him. Only she cannot say she believes what she does not. They must both respect each other's faith, and time and love will do wonders."

This attitude of tolerance and sympathy with the Christian Church was maintained by both sisters, though, as has already been said, they still adhered to the religion in which they had been brought up.

In the September of that year Constance's journals contain the following entries :

"FAST DAY: We none of us felt in the least hungry. How we all went through it I do not know. Mamma is in such a miserable state that I had to tell Eliot not to come before Wednesday. . . . She still looks ill and white, trembling and sad. She hardly sleeps and her one thought from morning till night is the Marchese. Annie was not in love with him, but she is desperately in love with Eliot."

"Poor Eliot! The time is coming nearer and nearer. We none of us sleep or eat, and all feel in a most miserable state."

"Eliot proposed. I shall never forget this day, the agitation and the pain that we went through. We were almost crazy from morning till night. The gentlemen went out shooting; we met them. Annie and Eliot walked home together. After dinner he spoke to Papa and then came the scene. I shall never forget it."

On the next day she writes :

"Papa went away early after a little conversation with me and Joe" [her uncle]. "Now he has to face New Court." [The City Offices of the House of Rothschild.]

Evidently there must have been a great deal of discussion, as she says :

"Papa came home in the evening quite against it. Eliot left. Annie was miserable."

During October 1872 the plot thickens.

"We hardly eat or sleep and lead quite an excitable life. I send little notes to Eliot and we look forward to a happy *dénouement*. Annie is perfectly fearless and hopeful. The feeling is weighing on me that a storm is brewing. Wrote to Eliot to invite him for the 13th. Hope he will come. . . . He wrote to say he would and begged of me to speak to Mamma. . . .

"I advised Annie to speak to Papa and to force a consent from him. . . . With her brave, courageous spirit, she actually went to Papa and had it out with him. He gave his consent. Annie is allowed to write to Eliot. Joy!"

Poor Sir Anthony is evidently much affected by the disapproval of his brothers, as she writes :

"Papa in good spirits until he went to Mentmore, but returned looking gloomy. . . ."

On another occasion she writes :

"Went to Mentmore. Aunt Juliana not visible. Hannah is not very *avenante*."

At last, at the end of the month, we read :

"And so it is settled. . . . I feel very happy and quite satisfied and enchanted. . . ."

And, in November :

"Mr. Osborne was very nice and kind and quite touching about Annie. He really is full of good feeling !"

In January 1873 there must have been celebrations, as we read :

"The Prince of Wales. All went off well. The day's sport succeeded very well and the ball in the evening was jolly.

"Rode to the Meet. It was a wonderful sight and one which I shall never forget. It looked like a Derby Day. Heard the news of the Emperor's death. The evening's success was much commented upon. The Prince left us in the afternoon, delighted, apparently, with his visit. We have had a most successful party and Annie's new relatives got on capitally with us.

"Paid my bills which were enormous. Felt rather angry at the fearful way they had run up lately.

"Mamma took up notes to ask people for the Duke of Edinburgh. It is a *very* short invitation.

"The Duke arrived. He is certainly handsome, but has not so good an expression as the Prince. But we had a pleasant day and evening.

"Our party went off well. There was no stiffness or ceremony about. Piatti¹ and his wife appeared directly after lunch. We had music in the afternoon and a great deal more in the evening. It went very well, but the Duke scrapes awfully. A jolly party.

"Went to the school. Made the children sing for

¹ The great 'cellist.

Piatti. Then came the deputation from the school with Annie's bracelet.

"FEBRUARY, 1873: Mr Flower stayed with us till the afternoon. When he left we all felt rather dull.

"Annie went about a little, and in the afternoon to the Princess of Wales who received her very kindly. We had quantities of visitors all day long. How I hope and pray that all may go off well.

"February 11th: Annie's first wedding day [the civil marriage]. It was a most melancholy affair. Papa looked so sad and we all felt it so dreadfully, Annie included.

"I felt stupified and so ill, so nervous, so utterly miserable that my pen refuses to repeat my sufferings. I shall never forget the day. I was partly the cause of it, and I hope and trust it may all turn out well. May God help and protect us all. . . ."

The religious ceremony took place in the private chapel at Wimpole, the Hardwicks' family estate.

Some weeks later Constance sends her sister the following account of a musical party at Aston Clinton :

"Our musical party is over and was a brilliant success. . . . Everyone came we asked—a most astonishing thing—the Coopers, Blanche,¹ Annie Thackeray, Count Nesselrode, Mr Flower, Mr Barrington, Mr Schoeffler, the dear Joé², Hallé, Madame Neruda.³

"The musical trio was a capital idea, for they are all great friends and are delighted to play together. Hallé . . . plays whatever he is asked to, and is not a bit fussy.

"Before dinner we had a magnificent Fantaisie of Schubert with Hallé and Joachim, which they played twice over. It is a glorious production and has a triumphal march at the end which is full of vigour and melody. It

¹ Lady Lindsay, daughter of the Hon. Mrs. FitzRoy.

² Joachim.

³ The well-known violinist.

is like the strain of music one might expect to meet a soul entering Paradise. Then came a fine performance of Bach for two violins, most interesting.

"The Brights and Molico¹ dined with us, at which repast we had a real Babel of tongues, but artists and common place mortals all got on wonderfully well together, and Count Nesselrode lost his heart completely to Joachim—no wonder!

"After dinner . . . the music recommenced. Hallé opened the concert by a rapid succession of Chopin, and we all agreed that he surpassed himself. We were such a delighted, enthusiastic audience that we quite roused him into energy and the result was beautiful. . . . Then the Hungarian Dances, a kind of wild, diabolical, weird, demon jumping-up effect, at which the violin itself seemed to dance. Joachim played like one possessed, and was most delighted at his dear Brahms, and declares that the Dances cannot be performed too often, that they are some of the finest compositions he has ever heard, and even goes on to say that Brahms is one of the greatest of composers and that he is not appreciated enough. . . .

" . . . Madame Neruda slept in my dressing-room, so we had little chats while we were dressing. . . ."

The Yorkes spent their honeymoon in Venice and Egypt, and shortly after their return Lady de Rothschild and Constance accompanied Sir Anthony to Vienna, where he appeared in his office of British Commissioner at the great exhibition. As usual they paid Baroness Charles a visit at Frankfort on their way out.

Both Lady de Rothschild and Constance write to Mrs. Yorke graphic accounts of the proceedings, which give a picture of Imperial Vienna. Constance is relieved and delighted at the manner in which her sister's marriage is received by her Austrian relations. She writes to Annie :

" . . . When your intentions were known here Uncle

¹ Miss Molique, daughter of the composer.

Anselm exclaimed : ' Qu'ils viennent ici, je les recevrai à bras ouverts . . . ' "

Her cousins were equally delighted, especially that it should have been with Eliot Yorke, whom they already knew and liked.

" I think if they could [Constance continues] they would have illuminated Vienna for you and Eliot. I was so much astonished that I shook hands with Salbert¹ and told him how much I respected him, at which Mamma laughed. . . . "

Both speak in glowing terms of the beauty and charm of Lady Dudley. Lady de Rothschild writes of her as

" A vision of beauty, but even more remarkable for her perfect simplicity than for her loveliness. Both Lord and Lady Dudley enquired after you and Eliot and wanted to know all about your Egyptian tour. . . . "

Constance gives an instance of Lord Dudley's lavish generosity :

" The Dudleys are very polite and friendly. Lord D. is grandiose. The other day at the Exhibition he asked me to show him the prettiest thing in Hancock's case. So I pointed to a beautiful ring bracelet of cats' eyes and diamonds, worth, I should say, about £300. Of course I had no idea what he was going to do, when, to my dismay, he said : ' I will send it you ' and told the jeweller to put it on one side for me. Still I thought it was fun, when the other morning I received a message from Hancock asking where I should like to have the bracelet. Yesterday evening we dined with the Dudleys and I told Lady Dudley that I could not think of taking the bracelet and was very much ashamed, but she said I must, it was a souvenir of the Exhibition and that Lord Dudley wanted me to have had it for the ball at the Embassy. So I am to have the beautiful cats' eyes after all.

¹ Her cousin, Solomon Albert.

"The Dudleys have magnificent rooms in a very grand new hotel belong to Mr Landau. The hotel was an old palace and suits His Lordship's grand notions. He has his servants in powder and smart liveries and we had an excellent dinner, beautifully served. There were only ourselves, the Coopers and a Prince of Salnes. We were all very jolly. Our two English couples are really nice and Lady Dudley is looking like a Venus. She took me out driving in her barouche, and it amused me to see all the people turning round to look at her. She became very confidential and told me a great deal about herself . . . and ended by scolding me for not calling her Georgie. There is an entire absence of vanity about her and a *naïveté* which are charming. . . .

"On Wednesday Papa and I went to a ball at the English Embassy which amused me very much. The Prince of Wales was there, of course, the Prussian royalties and one or two Archdukes. . . . Prince Arthur and the Crown Prince of Denmark were there, besides all the English at Vienna, so that, in fact, one heard nothing but English talked. The Austrians speak our language to perfection. Princess Metternich was glittering with jewels . . . but there are no really great beauties here, and the girls are not to be compared to our young ladies. . . .

"There were four large reception rooms ; in one were the tea and refreshments, in the other, the smart dancing, for the royalties and married women, in the other a general dancing for everybody, and the fourth was the Comtesse's room where all the girls sit together and where their partners come and find them. They dance every time madly, and do not see their chaperones the whole evening, but they manage to sit down and rest between every dance, in fact, ladies never stand ! I was introduced to quantities of people, a point of etiquette which is closely observed here, for, in fact, in a small lancers the gentlemen asked my partner, Lord Blandford, to introduce me to all of them and then Addy introduced me to the girls. You are supposed to know everyone you meet and cannot talk without introduction. . . .

" . . . It is a wild, frivolous society and the ladies are rather improper. . . .

"The music was very good, and the dancing is wonderfully fast and full of spirit. . . . There was no woman to be compared to Lady Dudley.

" . . . It is terribly wet and cold, and the streets are full of thick, black mud. . . ."

Four days later Constance writes again :

" . . . Yesterday we had two royal entertainments. One was pleasant, the other was odious. We went early in the afternoon to the Burg to see the Crown Princess of Germany, who had a small reception of about a dozen English ladies. We all wore bonnets and morning dresses, with the exception of the little Princess, who was already dressed for dinner in a low dress with a crown of emeralds and diamonds and necklace to match.

" She came up to us directly and began to talk as pleasantly as possible. She told us that she had seen the Synagogue at Prague which interested her very much, also the synagogue at Rome, that she often went to the service at Berlin to hear the music which was beautiful. She asked if you had written lately. We told her that you had been presented at the drawing-room, and she went on talking so nicely and so agreeably. She is very bright and clever, and we were quite sorry when our little visit came to an end. She is not pretty, but has a nice, bright, cheery face and a very dignified manner.

" In the evening we went to a reception at court which was a most dismal affair. Fancy an enormous room, with two lines of people, several hundred gentlemen and perhaps thirty ladies of different nationalities, with their respective ambassadresses and ministers' wives. No Austrian ladies, nothing but foreigners. . . . There was no music and hardly any chairs.

" We stood next to Lady Buchanan, close to the royal seats, looking at the mass of gentlemen who did not approach the ladies. After waiting for nearly an hour, we all stood up a little stiffer and straighter and were aware of a magnificent apparition gliding down towards us. It was the Empress, accompanied by one Archduchess and followed by one lady. Her Majesty was dressed in white,

was literally covered with jewels and wore plaits and curls waving down to her waist and encircled by emeralds and diamonds. She was rouged up to her eyes, and when she stood in front of us and began to talk she looked like an actress—or rather, like a painted doll. She is certainly handsome, but has no charm and no nature and goes about with a continual smile which does not go up to her eyes. She has a marvellous figure and moves beautifully.

“Her unfortunate Majesty had to receive countless introductions and to speak to everyone. Then the Archduchess sidled up to us. . . . She is very chatty and good-natured. She asked Mamma what relation she was to Mrs Yorke. ‘All the court read the account of her wedding, and we were all so much interested in it.’ I must tell you that Eliot had a most flaming account in the Vienna paper of his various talents and accomplishments. She talked to us for a long while and was very friendly, but then came a great deal more standing for the Empress seated herself on the sofa, and the Emperor came round to everyone. Meanwhile numbers of servants ran about the room with little silver trays, filled with ices, lemonade, orangeade, &c. They looked like trays at a railway station. . . .

“We dined with the two gentlemen last night. . . . After dinner we all went up-stairs and everyone smoked. The ladies puffed away at huge cigars which gave Mamma a headache.

“My bracelet has just come from Hancock. I feel so ashamed that I do not know what to do—it is magnificent. . . .

“I am so glad to hear that you and Eliot are both well and are looking so beaming. It is a pleasure to hear of you from everyone. . . .”

Three days later, on May 16th, she writes again :

“ . . . Last night we dined with the Anselms [her relatives]. Princess Metternich was there looking hideous and squalling. I thought of Eliot’s passion for her, and could not think she looked lady-like whilst smoking an enormous

cigar. O! you cannot imagine how we suffer from the cigars; they all sit in a small room which is filled with volumes of smoke and becomes at last stifling. I felt so sick and stupid and had a bad headache all night. Dear Lady Dudley was there, dressed in white with coral and diamond ornaments, looking lovely. . . . I wore my cat's-eye bracelet, which was passed round to everyone and duly admired. . . ."

In an earlier letter Constance speaks of the Empress as :

"Such a beautiful woman, with her lovely hair hanging down her back in plaits. She was very well dressed. . . ."

While Lady de Rothschild describes Sir Anthony's conversations with her Majesty :

" . . . The Empress goes to bed at half past nine and rides out at seven o'clock in the morning. Papa thought her beautiful—even more so than the Princess of Wales. I could hardly judge of her at the Exhibition, though she appeared to me very handsome with an original, striking cast of countenance. She lamented the bad weather to Papa who replied that the rain would improve the state of the roads in the Prata for her Majesty's rides and therefore was not to be regretted ! "

And again :

" . . . Papa and the Empress had a long talk together upon the *one* subject which appears to enliven her—horses and hunting. She reads the Field and knows all about the meets and runs in the Vale. It is a pity her Imperial Majesty has not a few other tastes that can be appreciated by her own people, with whom she is not at all popular. They say she interests herself in nothing. . . ."

Annie, knowing her mother's inherent dislike of show and grandeur, writes with amusement to her sister :

"I can hardly imagine Mamma so constantly in Royal society, but still, after the touchingly amiable remark of the Prince of Wales, I think she ought to be a confirmed courtier for the rest of her life. . . ."

Evidently Lady de Rothschild's attitude towards royalty remained aloof and even critical, in spite of the glamour with which it was surrounded at Vienna.

She writes in her journal :

"On Thursday we dined at the Dudleys, last night at the Prince of Wales and this evening we go to Prince Hohenlohe, Royal Dukes and Royal Princes *en masse*. The Princess of Germany appears cleverer and brighter than the generality of royal personages, and Fritz seems charming."

In 1874 she writes of her Royal guests at Aston Clinton :

"The Duke of Edinburgh was in high spirits and full of fun, but he is not *princely* in mind or manner. The Czarewitch an extremely goodnatured, natural and amenable young man—but there is no royal prestige about him either and one does not see *why* he should be the Emperor of all the Russias. Such princes, amiable and friendly as they are, might well furnish arguments to republicans ! . . . What a poor school a court must be—judging from those royal specimens."

On her return from Vienna, in the June of 1873, Constance writes in her journal :

"LONDON : Back again in this old, old, old life. Such a running about here and there and everywhere. Very anxious to see Annie. Can hardly await the day."

"Off to see Annie in her little house.¹ Dear Eliot was as usual charming and full of fun and in high spirits."

She attended various balls and other functions of the London season.

¹ The Eliot Yorkes had a house in Curzon Street.

"Went to the state performance [in honour of the Shah of Persia] at the Opera. It was a glorious spectacle."

During the next three years neither Constance's health nor her spirits seem to have been at their best. She was ill with scarlet fever, Sir Anthony's attacks of gout were frequent and severe and her uncle, Mayer de Rothschild, of Mentmore, was in failing health, and died in 1874. She sees a great deal of Lady Brownlow, of whom she writes :

"... Annie and I went to Ashridge. It gave me quite a thrill to come into this house where that sweet, genial woman lives. I am in love with her."

Also of Mrs. Yorke's sister-in-law, Lady Elizabeth Biddulph :

"What a woman she is, how she raises me out of myself. I feel more full of strength and thought."

Both friends were sincere churchwomen, and with them she had long religious discussions. She frequently attended church services with Lady Elizabeth, and in return took her to synagogue.

"I went to church with dear Libbet, which made me feel so happy and contented. It has the best possible influence for my whole day. Party at Piccadilly for Prince Czarevitch magnificent."

She came under a much less conventional influence in her lifelong friendship with Miss Frances Power Cobbe, an Irishwoman, who had been brought up in a most orthodox manner, but by this time had become a Theist, a great champion of women's rights, and a violent anti-vivisectionist. Constance writes in her journal :

" I have been introduced to Miss Cobbe and am greatly interested in this kind and genial woman. She has a splendid head, a good countenance and a delightful voice. To me she is fascinating and interesting and I hope to see more of her and to become better acquainted with her."

And again, a few months later :

" Paid Miss Cobbe a long visit. She asked me to write an *article on Hebrew Women* for the New Quarterly."

" Had a long and interesting conversation with Miss Cobbe and read her my ' Hebrew Women.' "

A week or two later her little diary records on Saint Amor's Day :

" What a saint ! And to think that an old Russian monster should have proposed to me on such a day. I was struck dumb by the letter. I had to answer my proposal in due form. It was almost laughable. But, good Heavens, where is the right one ? "

" Went out driving and met C. Flower, H.L. and A.S. What is going to happen to-day or this month ?

" Went to Miss Cobbe and read her my notes. She seemed pleased and made me hopeful and anxious to write. What a great piece of good fortune that I should know such a nice, distinguished woman."

Her literary activities had by no means diminished, and we find her reading Heine to Sir Arthur Helps (the author of *Friends in Council*), whom she first met while on a visit to Sandringham in 1873, and being asked to review one of his books.

In 1874 Constance went on a short trip to Holland with her mother, where she again met Cyril Flower, " buying everything he could lay his hands on." In a letter to Annie her mother describes his passion for collecting :

Lady de Rothschild to Mrs. Yorke.

" . . . Mr Flower is bitten with the Oriental blue and white

china mania, and is as difficult to tear away from any shop containing those treasures as an American lady from Worth . . .

" . . . Mr Flower has just come back from a *blue* shop, much elated, having bought *ninety-three articles* ! . . . "

In August 1875 there is grave anxiety over Sir Anthony's health. He had great hopes that if he were on board a ship his condition might improve, and a large steamer was chartered for him in Southampton Water ; his family occupied a house at Netley, near Sydney Lodge, the home of Lord Hardwicke, and Mrs. Yorke and her husband lived close by. On August 18th Lady de Rothschild writes, full of doubts of

" the *ship* which I pray may be our *convalescent* home but I have more fear than hope, and think with dread of our move on to our floating house. . . . "

And on

" SEPTEMBER 7th. The Court, Netley: The dreaded Exodus has been performed, and here we are, partly on sea and partly on shore. Till now the change has certainly been an advantageous one for Anthony, who is pleased with his new marine quarters and enjoys the sea air and varying panorama of ships and boats, giving him constantly something new to look at whilst on deck. May his health as well as his spirits derive benefit from the change."

On the 4th January, 1876, Sir Anthony died on board his ship.

Among the many letters of condolence and appreciation received by Lady de Rothschild, was the following from Disraeli :

" Hughenden Manor January 5th 1876

" One of the best of men has left us. However prepared, it is an event, which it is impossible, for all who knew him

not to feel, and to feel deeply : Impossible, not to remember so many kindnesses, and a life of so much affection !

“ I know, from sad experience, it is in vain to console ; but the sympathy of a true friend is not entirely without value, and I offer it from

“ Your affectionate Servant,

“ B. DISRAELI.

“ The Lady de Rothschild.”

There was also a long letter from their old friend, Charles Villiers, written in a very shaky hand. In it he says :

“ . . . Even though you heard, as you might with perfect truth, of the entire unanimity of feeling which has pervaded society on this occasion, and of the universal recognition there has been of the kindness, generosity and thorough liberality of mind that ever characterised poor, dear Sir Anthony, it is indeed sad that he should have been taken from us ; but what determines our fate in this world we know nothing of and we have only to submit ourselves calmly to the ills that are poured upon us, and endeavour, as far as this is possible, to mitigate the misery which they entail. . . .”

On March 12th, 1876, Lady de Rothschild resumes her journal :

“ Only a little more than six months have elapsed since I last wrote a line in this book—but what a gulf separates that time from this. An epoch of my life closed—a new, changed, sad one commencing—my husband gone ! The many days of pain closed in the grave, my poor, dear, kind, loving Anthony lying cold in Willesden Cemetery ! And with his death—all, *all* is changed.”

During the rest of this year both mother and daughter led a quiet life at Aston Clinton. Lady de Rothschild writes :

“ MONDAY, OCTOBER 2nd : Have read a good deal of late—to fly from thoughts I fly to books and bless the

writers—Finished Burnet and read the first and, unfortunately, only volume of Forster's *Swift*. Reading now 'Through Bosnia and Herzegovina' and the Greek Poets by A. Symonds—very well written and extremely interesting."

Constance, at the end of the year, summarizes her activities at Aston Clinton and gives a list of the books she has read :

"... I have written part of my new work, a little story called 'Two days in Caddenabbia.' We have gone through 'As you Like It' and are now reading 'Henry V.' " [She had inaugurated Shakespeare Readings in the village.] "I have made a thorough inspection of the girls' and infant schools. I have recommenced my music. "BOOKS READ :

"Read 'Louis XVIII' (twelve volumes), Amberley's 'Analysis of Religious Belief' (two volumes), 'Ancien Régime' by Taine (one volume), 'The Place of God in History' by Bunsen, 'Rahel' by Jennings, part of Stanley's 'Jewish Church' (the third volume), Miss Cobbe's essay on Zoroaster, 'Chips from a German Workshop' (one volume), introduction to the 'Science of Religion,' 'As You Like it,' 'Madcap Violet' (two volumes), 'Joan' (three volumes)."

It is curious that just a year after Sir Anthony his sister-in-law, Juliana, the mother of the future Lady Rosebery, should also have died on board her yacht. Lady de Rothschild writes :

"MARCH 18th, 1877 : Last Saturday week received the news of poor Juliana's death on board the 'Czarina.' A wonderfully bright and gifted spirit has passed away, but not without having effected, during a brief period and many years of suffering, great and lasting good."

The next season was spent in London as usual, and on her return to Aston Clinton, at the end of the summer, Lady de Rothschild writes, sadly :

"... Arranging and rearranging—a ghost-like and sad operation, when those who first inhabited the rooms or had them built and furnished, are gone never to return and see them more ! "

This was new work to her. It was Sir Anthony who had always taken the greater interest in beautifying his houses. Lady Battersea told me he did not buy for the sake of buying anything beautiful, as did her own husband, but that he knew exactly what ornament or bit of furniture was needed to make each room complete. He seems, in fact, to have taken the major share in the preparations needed for their lavish entertaining, both at Aston Clinton and in their London house in Grosvenor Place.

Three days later Lady de Rothschild writes :

" Why are joys, like swallows, birds of passage at best, and so rapid in their flight that one has only time to see them dart across the lawn, or mark their circles on the sky and they are gone far away out of our sight ? "

On November 22nd, 1877, Constance, aged 34, married Cyril Flower. Her devotion to her mother was so strong that it was an understood condition that they should only be separated for some part of the year, and that the Flowers should make their home with her at Aston Clinton.

She had led a full life, busy with reading, writing, society and multifarious activities ; and in many ways her tastes were dissimilar to those of her husband—Constance's sedentary, Cyril's active ; hers philanthropic, his artistic ; but she appreciated his high spirits and enthusiasm and good looks, and, to judge from this description given by Professor Jebb in his letter to his own mother,

it is not surprising that his insistent courtship finally won her consent :

"The more I see of Flower the more interesting he becomes as a psychological study. He is the only instance with which I am acquainted of a man whom the whole world has agreed with one consent to pet—from Whewell to the whiteaproned men who carry the baked meats from the kitchens on their heads, nobody can resist him. The most dyspeptic and fastidious dons ask him to dinner. Professors write him notes and send him books. Scarcely a man of his set who has left the University for the last two years, but has correspondence with him. Artists are perpetually painting him. Bootmakers call to borrow his boots as models. I have constantly come into his rooms with him when he has found anonymous presents on his table. In short he is the irresistible man. I think he is a very dear boy, and too good to be spoilt, but I sometimes fear that when he leaves Cambridge for London he will find the change rather trying. Here he is the sovereign master of the situation. . . . From his taste I consider that there is no appeal. . . ."

The wrench to Lady de Rothschild was great, but a month before their marriage she writes :

" . . . All changes are more or less agitating and alarming and this *great one*, which must bring so many novelties into Constance's life and some rather dreaded alterations in mine, cannot fail to give us both grave and sometimes sad preoccupations. Still, I trust that on the whole Constance has chosen the better and the happier lot—and it ought to, and does, make *me* happy to think that she will not be left alone in this cold world but that she will have the love and companionship of one who, I believe, is truly devoted to her, and who has a fine, kind and generous nature."

On the announcement of his engagement Cyril Flower received, among many others, a warm letter of congratulation from Sir Dighton Probyn (private secretary to King Edward VII) :



THE HON. ELIOT YORKE



CYRIL FLOWER, LORD BATTERSEA

"... You are indeed a lucky man, the very luckiest in the whole of England I think, and I congratulate you most heartily—as also does my wife. You are marrying a person fit to be Queen of England. Pray remember us (my wife and self) very kindly to her—no, give her my *love*, and if you want to, shoot me for saying this. I shall not go out with you. Were I to go out with you, I might perhaps deprive Miss Constance of what I know you will be,—a very good husband. I do really congratulate you..."

The Rothschilds' old friend, Mr. Delane, also wrote Cyril Flower a letter, congratulating him on having

"attained the affection of one of the most charming women in England."

After a honeymoon spent in Italy, where they met the Yorkes, they returned to England on January 14th, 1878, and the next day Constance writes of the reception given them on their arrival at Aston Clinton.

"A most exciting day. Unfortunately I had neuralgia. Dressed at Grosvenor Place feeling ill. Set off by the 1.45. I wore my red dress and white bonnet. Cyril was in brown with his long blue coat. Mr James,¹ Evelina² and Emmy awaited us at the station. A Yeomanry escort were drawn up to receive us.

"We had a magnificent and most delightful reception. Tring was beautifully decorated and Aston Clinton was equally well adorned. The entire village came to meet me and seemed delighted to see me. Walked about with the people and talked to them. A very pleasant evening."

Surrey House, opposite the Marble Arch, became their London home. Mr. Flower entirely re-decorated it. The marbles on the walls and

¹ The family lawyer.

² Lord Rothschild's daughter.

floor of the hall, and on the walls of the dining-room, had once (about A.D. 1700) formed part of the decoration of a side chapel in a church in Brescia. The church had been dismantled and the marble put on sale in London, where Mr. Flower saw it and bought it.

The inner hall at Surrey House was Dutch, in carved oak—date 1630—which the Flowers saw and bought in Holland. The ball-room was added later, and panelled with Flemish carving. It became the scene of many social functions.

The Flowers made their country home at Aston Clinton. Mr. Flower reorganized and rebuilt the stables, and added a wing to the house ; and here Lady de Rothschild entertained their many guests, and from here Cyril and his friends could get their hunting.

In spite of this, now that both her daughters were married, Lady de Rothschild had to pass many months more or less alone. She still had her old distrust of herself with regard to society, invariably thinking that she had not enough with which to amuse visitors. She would probably never have invited anyone but her very oldest friends. However, her daughters were never content unless they could make their mother acquainted with anyone of interest with whom they came in contact, not only for the sake of their mother, but of their friends. When it came her way, Lady de Rothschild was evidently interested in hearing conversation, if it were sparkling or witty, or if it touched on literature or politics. Still, she was more than content to settle down again to solitude and books, with visits from the rector and from her agent and chance neighbours. In Buckinghamshire she lived within a drive of

many of her relations, who were all devoted to her, and there could not have been many days when she did not see one or other of them.

Lord Rothschild settled at Tring Park during the 'seventies, and Mr. Alfred de Rothschild had built himself a mansion, on the lines of a modern French chateau, at Halton, within a few miles of Aston Clinton ; while the youngest of Baron Lionel's sons, Leopold, made his home at Ascott. This property, which he had inherited from his father, was two miles from Leighton Buzzard, within view of Mentmore, the house built by his uncle, Baron Mayer de Rothschild ; and Mrs. Leopold became very intimate with Lady Rosebery, by this time the owner of Mentmore.

Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild had also settled in Buckinghamshire, at Waddesdon, seven miles from Aylesbury. Here, on a site purchased from the Duke of Marlborough, he built the house which Lady de Rothschild describes in 1884 :

" JANUARY 10th: . . . Visited this morning the hot-houses, stables, grounds, &c., of Waddesdon—really a wonderful creation—all on a scale of magnificence and grandeur ! To me, somewhat over-powering as a residence on account of its lofty position, its size and palatial finish, but it has great beauties which it is a pleasure to look upon. Ferdy pleasant and *simple* in the midst of his splendour."

The following extract from a letter from Constance to her mother gives us another glimpse of the luxurious house and grounds, and of the parties entertained there :

" . . . In the house we have : the Duchess of Marlborough and Lady Sarah, the Wagrams, the Owen Williams, the Sands, Lord Wolseley, Lord Rodney, Seymour Finch, a Mr Walsh, Member for Radnor, a very nice young Welsh-

man, a clever Mr Spring Rice, and last and least H.R.H. with a youthful equerry!

"I helped Ferdie and Alice to entertain the country guests and *walked miles* in consequence, for, what with the house and grounds and menagerie, there was plenty to be seen.

"The Christy Minstrels and a Hungarian Band performed alternately and gave great satisfaction, particularly the latter. But the house itself with all its wonders, pictures, *objets d'art* and magnificent couches and satin cushions and palms and photos of crowned heads with autograph signatures, was a never ending source of pleasure. Lady Jane said it was *seraphic* . . ."

On January 7th, 1878, Lady de Rothschild writes in her journal:

"Annie and Eliot are at Malta—their first sea voyage well over. Connie and Cyril I hope arrived last night at Paris. That sounds pleasantly near home.

"On Saturday heard the great news of Hannah's engagement—Her delight intense. Much seems combined to make the match a brilliant and happy one—position, wealth and talent—the future alone can say if any other ingredient be wanting—now all appears most bright."

Even in 1874 Lady de Rothschild had singled out Hannah's future husband, Lord Rosebery, as being

"very pleasant—quite apart and above the young men of the day."

Within a week of their return to England, Constance paid Hannah a visit in London and

"found her in tearing spirits. She was tremendously happy and has reason to be so."

Hannah by this time had lost both her parents, and was therefore her own mistress.

Her wedding, at which Lord Beaconsfield gave her away, was much more of a public function

than those of her two cousins had been. Constance was unable to go, but writes to her sister :

St. Leonards.

Thursday, March 21st, 1878.

" The papers shall speak for themselves.

" . . . Hannah was *most* anxious that we should be present at the ceremony, but I would not appear in public for the first time without Cyril, who is not yet strong enough for such tiring or exciting performances." [He had developed typhoid shortly after they returned from their honeymoon.]

" How delighted Hannah must have been with all the show, and with such a troop of grandees to witness her espousals. I believe that Lord Rosebery's presents are extraordinary, quite in the Lord Dudley style. . . . But times do change ; there has not been an ill-natured article in the *Jewish Chronicle* about Hannah, and no paper has taken notice of her being a Jewess. . . ."

Hannah was a great deal more orthodox than her cousins, and during her married life she hardly, if ever, attended a church service, and continued to support very generously all the Jewish institutions in which she had been interested. However, she felt it only right that her four children should be brought up in their father's religion, and Lord Rosebery, in return, respected her opinions ; and on her premature death at Edinburgh in 1890 all the Jewish funeral rites were observed in full.

The year 1878 ends very sadly, for on December 21st the entry in Constance's journal is :

" Lost my dear brother-in-law,"

and on the 31st :

" The last night of the year. Could not sit up to see the New Year in. Oh, *miserable* 1878 !"

On the succession of his eldest brother in the

autumn of 1873 to the title of Hardwicke, Eliot Yorke had consented, nine months after his marriage, to stand in his brother's place as Conservative candidate for Cambridgeshire. But from Constance's journal we can see how little his heart was in politics. She writes in October :

"Eliot is going to stand . . . Poor man ! He is perpetually going through severe ordeals. He is to speak to-morrow . . . He feels horribly nervous, poor man."

"Annie was in a state of trepidation about Eliot, but when the paper arrived containing his speech we felt quite happy. It was excellent, full of fun and spirit and feeling . . ."

And in November she remarks :

"Eliot seems rather bored about his electioneering. He does not take to it kindly . . ."

Nevertheless, Eliot was duly returned by his constituency, though he never took any very active part in politics. As a result of a heated and crowded political meeting in Cambridge he caught the chill that eventually proved fatal to him, and, after five years of very happy married life, Mrs. Yorke was left a widow.

In 1879 another blow fell upon Constance—the death in America of her cousin, Leonard Montefiore at the age of 26. He was a brilliant young man, the intimate friend of Alfred Milner and Arnold Toynbee, destined, it was thought, for a great future,

On September 6th, 1879, she writes :—

"Heard of Leonard's death. My friend, companion and playmate, to think that that bright, busy life is over, that another one is gone."

CHAPTER IX

1878-1881

Married Lives—Religion (1873-1890)—Election—

Mr. Gladstone

MRS. YORKE, after her great bereavement, kept her house in Curzon Street and her home at Hamble Cliff, and very much identified herself with the Yorke family, becoming "beloved Aunt Annie" to the members of the younger generation as they grew up. She became immersed in good works, encouraged thereto by her great friends, Archdeacon and Mrs. Wilberforce. As will be seen from the following letter, the friendship began while her husband was still alive :

Mrs. Yorke to Lady de Rothschild :

" Netley Fort, Southampton. Friday.

" DEAREST MAMMA,

" Very many thanks for your kind letter of yesterday. The great Temperance meeting went off very well indeed. Eliot spoke for about half an hour and really acquitted himself extremely well. Of course, as he was talking of liquors and not liquids he could truthfully advocate moderation, and he spoke a great deal about the advantages of reading rooms, clubs, coffee houses &c.

" One of the Doctors, Dr. Maclean, also spoke very sensibly and forcibly, but the speech of the evening was Mr. Wilberforce's who came out with a torrent of words, most vehemently exhorting everyone to total abstinence.

He is excessively fluent and earnest, but has not the power of language or delivery that his beloved father had. Socially I thought him charming; he is very liberal and not at all shoppy, in fact, like his dear Papa, he has evidently also some mundane propensities. He is, I should fancy, much more advanced in his opinions. He is quite the Nineteenth Century clergyman, and not at all the Mediæval priest. I very much approved of everything he said, which must rather have shocked the very clerical people. He particularly deprecated using the Bible as an authority for actions and customs of the present day.

"I am very glad to have made his acquaintance, as I think he is very pleasant and interesting. Perhaps his intense *dogginess* was a bond of union, and his firm conviction that poor, dear animals have their little future abode. He has a most pretty little wife, who, I believe, works as energetically as her husband among the poor at Southampton . . .

" Ever yours,
" ANNIE."

" Our dinner yesterday evening was very funny—everyone was afraid of taking wine—*en revanche* they all ate a great deal."

With the Canon she worked assiduously in the cause of temperance, and eventually became president and chairman of various societies, and founded several coffee houses, etc. There is an amusing letter to her sister in which she says :

" Hamble Cliff, Netley, Southampton.

" Wednesday (1887.)

" . . . I have a Temperance Meeting this evening for the women. A lady unknown to me from the B.W.T.A. (British Women's Temperance Association) is coming to hold a discourse which I hope will be good. But I think females are *far* more difficult to cope with than the other sex; they are so diplomatic and deceitful. Give me an honest male drunkard, and I can see my way with him.

"The beloved Canon has promised to come some day and have a little talk in a conversational manner with my old toppers in the Coffee House, which they will much enjoy . . .

"I *delight* in Lord Shaftesbury. He interests me immensely. I read him every evening and feel quite edified in his company."

Some years after Canon Wilberforce's death Mrs. Yorke told me that she thought it very remarkable of him never to have attempted to shake her belief in Judaism.

She shared the family interest in education, and, besides being manager of various elementary schools and a member of the Education Committee of the Hampshire County Council, she was for some time the only lady on the Council of the University College of Southampton. She was as intrepid in all these causes as she had been over her hunting in her younger days, journeying all over the country, at all hours of the day and night, presiding at meetings, and supporting and starting coffee houses. She could hardly refuse any appeal for money or for help.

Owing to her native shyness, she never enjoyed public speaking, but, when necessary, she spoke well and to the point. Her good work in Hampshire was so widespread that the Canon used playfully to call her "the Archbishop of Southampton."

During her few years of married life she had become infected with her husband's enthusiasm for yachting, and until the Great War hardly a year passed in which some of her friends and relations did not accompany her on a cruise in her beloved yacht, the *Garland*. This was, in fact, her one real relaxation, when she was at last free from the many claims made upon her:

She was much less expansive than her sister, and much more self-reliant, though, unlike the child Annie, remarkably humble-minded and self-effacing; but she retained her love of fun and her eyes had a pleasant twinkle, while her sense of humour was unailing.

My father, who knew both sisters as girls, used to describe Mrs. Yorke as having been pretty as well as lively; but when I knew her in early middle-age, she was a plump little rosy-cheeked woman, with a weather-beaten complexion and bright blue eyes, attracting by her courtesy, benevolence and quick wits. The picture of her cannot be complete without mentioning her love of dogs, and she was generally accompanied by one of these favourites.

Constance, on the other hand, according to my father, in her youth was not as good-looking as her sister. Her small hands and feet were her chief beauty; but later, when her hair had become a silvery white and was arranged in pompadour fashion, she resembled some of the pictures of Maria Theresa, the lower part of the face being full and rather heavy. There was a certain dignity about her in the carriage of her well-shaped head on the somewhat massive shoulders. But the prevailing impression which she gave was one of spontaneity and almost child-like enthusiasm, of good-fellowship and of great intellectual activity.

From now onwards Constance's life, as well as her sister's, became much more merged in that of her Christian friends and connections, although neither of them lost her active interest in Jewish concerns and her affectionate allegiance to her Rothschild cousins.

We have seen in the preceding pages how greatly

she was concerned with religion ; and now, in addition to her church friends, she was thrown into contact in her husband's Welsh constituency with many Dissenters, while her work for temperance drew her much into the society of earnest chapel folk. It is understandable that her active mind should have become greatly exercised over the various forms of religious belief.

In 1873 she had been staying with her uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Nathaniel Montefiore. Mrs. Montefiore was a convinced and fervent believer in Judaism, and Constance writes :

" During the ten days I spent at Coldeast, my mind dwelt much on the extraordinary history of the Jews. I felt that I was only Jewish by race, not by religion or by doctrine. My mind is not in the least impregnated with Jewish doctrine, I have not the feeling of pride of isolation. . . . My Church is a universal one, my God, the Father of all mankind, my creed charity, toleration and morality. I can worship the great Creator under any name. . . . The improvement of the race, the good of man ought to be our first thought, not the narrowing of our affection, not the glorifying of our Priesthood, not the adornment of our churches."

Eight years later she writes :

" DECEMBER 13th, 1881 : . . . At one time I had a great purpose at heart, but I do not see that I am advancing in it ; the spiritualising of Judaism. I wish I had the strength of mind to cling to my purpose, but I have dissipated my power on small objects. Life is so complicated in all its bearings and relations that it often necessitates this. Perhaps our characters are all the better for this splitting up of our powers."

The following remarks after hearing Dean Stanley preach throw further light on her attitude towards religion :

"... One passage struck me immensely :—' There may be morality without religion, but there cannot be religion without morality.' Then again, ' It is all the same, what Luther calls " Faith ", what Fenelon calls " Grace ", what Wesley calls " Righteousness ".' And again, ' No heretic is doing wrong who is acting up to his light.' Oh, saintly, unorthodox, delightful preaching that makes one feel better !"

Mrs. Flower was always interested by any form of religious emotion. She was greatly impressed by attending one of Moody and Sankey's¹ meetings.

" JUNE 10th, 1884 : Tea with Libbet after which Meeting at Moody's. I shall never forget it—the crowd, the up-turned faces, the singing, the earnestness, the enthusiasm, the sermon, Mathew XXII, 42, really preached for me. Had a long talk which I immensely enjoyed with Moody afterwards. It was an interesting hour. Could hardly sleep."

After spending an hour in conversation with Miss Cobbe she writes :

" I find that Theism does not give enough help."

She reads the Old and New Testaments

" with profound interest. . . ."

And that same summer :

" SEPTEMBER 20th, 1885 : Our New Year's Day : One of our holy days ; it should in turn bring us back the remembrance of fast days, so called, of the time when I clung to Judaism, when I wanted it to be the pattern of all other faiths, when I longed to purify and revive it, when I wished to lead a crusade in favour of it. . . ."

On the last day of 1890 she declares that she does not believe in the tenets of Christianity, and says :

¹ The revivalists.

"It is not true that Christ is the Son of God, but it is true that Christ is the most divine character in history."

She evidently feels that the Jews could learn much from the New Testament.

"It is not true that the Jews possess the whole of God's Word, but it is true that they possess a great part of it and ought to possess themselves of the other part—not beggar themselves spiritually. . . .

"Why can I not lift Judaism up into a wider sphere? It is so limited, so narrow, so racial. . . ."

However, her lines had fallen in other places.

Cyril Flower turned his mind to politics directly after his marriage and began to nurse the little borough of Brecon, for which he was returned in 1880, and Constance's life took on a different aspect, as she now had to take up the duties of the wife of a busy Member of Parliament. From her letters and journals we shall see how fully she could share in any of his philanthropic undertakings. Although she was never much of a partisan in politics, Constance's gracious, genial manners and ready sympathies and powers of expressing them must have been of great assistance to her husband. She was an excellent hostess.

There was an astonishing animation in her conversation, enhanced by a clear, pleasant voice. This gave her her popularity as a speaker. There was nothing slipshod about her; she polished up her speeches, and kept her papers and looked up her references with the greatest conscientiousness.

In 1880 all these qualities were brought into play. Two years before, Mr. and Mrs. Flower had begun to visit Brecon, where, as usual, she quickly made friends all round, and chief among them Miss

Fanny Morgan, who proved to be a great standby. Lady Battersea writes of her in her *Reminiscences* :

“ A convinced Liberal in politics, a supporter of women’s rights, and a devout churchwoman, but beloved by her Nonconformist compatriots.”

Miss Morgan became a moving power in Brecon and eventually was elected mayor. The friendship thus begun lasted until Lady Battersea’s death. They both worked ardently in the cause of temperance. Miss Morgan, now over eighty, wrote to me that she owed everything to Lady Battersea, who had opened her mind to the larger interests of life outside her little town, had given her books to read, helped her in her studies, and brought her into contact with politicians and literary men. She and Lady Battersea kept up a regular correspondence, some idea of which can be realized from the weight of Miss Morgan’s letters—over eleven pounds—which I returned at her request.

The following letters, written by Constance during Cyril Flower’s first election campaign, give a picture of an election fifty years ago.

“ Ffrwdgrech,

“ Brecon.

“ March 13th [1880].

“ . . . We drove down to the lecture in the evening, which took place in the Town Hall. The Conservative clergyman did not take the chair at the last moment, so a little parley ensued, which resulted in Mr Jones, the great liberal temperance Independant minister, jumping on the platform and performing the part of chairman. Poor Cyril looked as white as a sheet and was afraid he might have some hisses. But no ! It was a wonderful triumph from

first to last. The silence and attention were great and the applause vociferous. The people shouted, screamed, flung up their hats, almost encored and the long line of Dissenting Ministers quite jumped at the Puritan song. You cannot imagine what a scene it was !

" Cyril revived in the middle and was properly *dramatic*. Everyone was so delighted that they forgot to thank the chairman, which I wish I had done, as he mentioned me very nicely.

" A delightful old Welshman, a great orator, with a head like a poet, had come from a distance to hear Cyril, and shook hands with me afterwards, saying, 'you deserve success.' The whole audience stood congregated round the door when we drove out, and made the most awful noise you can conceive. The ponies behaved wonderfully. . . ."

" March 20th.

" . . . We have been driving about with our four horses, leaving cards and canvassing the grandees, but we much prefer the ponies, or our two legs, and think '*il faut souffrir pour être belle*.' Not that the four horses imperil us in any way, but their movements are slow and sedate and driving through the narrow, tortuous streets of the town, with people screaming, cheering, shrieking, at times hooting, is hardly an agreeable performance. However, Brown makes a capital postillion, and looks ten years younger and Keat, mounted on a superb hunter, is a good out-rider for clearing the way. Many of the people delight in looking at the horses, so that we really give them a pleasure.

" Yesterday I canvassed a romantic old man, who pointed to the sky and said : 'there are my colours.' And that is what I tell the Conservatives.

" Cyril had a very successful meeting last night, and an immense audience. . . . At last, when it was all over and Cyril rose to thank his audience, the entire multitude stood up. It really was an exciting scene. Then they turned and cheered me. I rose to bow, but the men thought I was going to address them and were silent in a moment. What could I do ? I said as loud as I could : 'Gentlemen, I thank you for the kind reception you have

given my husband. I am glad and proud to be here and I am growing very fond of Wales.' Morrell said I was as white as a sheet, but I did get the words out somehow.

"All the audience awaited us in the street and closed round the carriage. The ponies, according to Keat, liked it, for they walked gravely along, never tried to kick, and seemed as good-natured as the people. The crowd accompanied us singing songs up to the *very* turn of our road, and I could not help thinking the whole time how terrible a hostile crowd would be !

"After such fearful excitement neither of us could sleep, and we both feel shaky this morning. The Conservative meeting at the Castle was a very poor affair. . . ."

The following was written by Cyril Flower to Lady de Rothschild :

"... Last night was a very eventful one, for we had a public meeting in the Town Hall... Con was in the gallery and vociferously cheered. She has been a splendid and indefatigable canvasser. At last she rose, and addressed a few words very clearly to the men below, who wanted to drag us through the streets. . . ."

Constance writes :

" March 25th.

"... It will be a tremendous fight, for landlords are putting on the screw, and are trying to make their tenants promise their votes to the Conservative interest. We have all the best and most fluent speaking on our side, which in Wales is a great thing, for the people can listen to the speeches by the hour. . . ."

" March 30th.

"... Many here do not look upon me as a genuine liberal, because I do not lend myself to abuse of Dis. or burst into raptures over Gladstone.

"Politics are very disgusting and I am constantly reminded of the latter days of the Roman Empire, when the general who promised most to the Imperial guard received the Imperial crown. And yet, I suppose party government is very healthy and in time must be a channel

of education, even to the lowest. How truly the great Master, G. Eliot, says: 'canvassing makes a gentleman acquainted with many strange animals, together with the ways of catching and taming them; and thus the knowledge of natural history advances amongst the aristocracy and the wealthy commoners of our land.' I have written this out as a kind of text for Cyril, so that he should not flatter himself that he has much to do with reasonable, thinking beings, but principally with strange animals! The franchise for the boroughs is as much too low as it is too high for the Counties. . . ."

" Monday.

" A poor woman whom I saw to-day called out: 'true blue for ever and Mr. Gladstone.' In fact, Gladstone and Bright are positively adored in Wales, and their portraits are often to be found hanging up in the cottages. There is a genuine feeling of enthusiasm for the great Nonconformist, Bright, and for his oratorical powers, for the Welsh love the gift of the gab. They can listen to poetry by the hour, and there is always absolute silence for a poetical quotation. Reading the speeches of the Welsh ministers would give you no idea of what they were like, the fire and *entrain* with which they are spoken make them very impressive, even when they may be exaggerated, or not very logical. And then they employ hosts of anecdotes and fables and bring in poetry whenever they can. . . ."

" On April 1, 1880, he [Cyril] was rewarded by obtaining a majority of 59 votes in a constituency of 800 voters."

Letters of congratulation to the Flowers naturally came pouring in from all quarters. Matthew Arnold wrote to them, in spite of his political views:

" Cobham, Surrey.

" April 3rd. 1880.

" MY DEAR MRS FLOWER,

" I grumbled at your absence from the Myers marriage,

but it was worth while staying away to secure this famous Victory. I heard of you in Brecon, dazzling in light blue, and winning everybody's good will. We were all of us deeply interested in the election, and the first thing we looked for in yesterday's paper was the fate of Mr Flower.

"We send our heartiest congratulations to him and you. What a total scattering it is! and how obscurely but decisively these disposing currents seem to form themselves in the immense mass—immense it now is—of voters! I think Lord B. was for our people a demoralising Minister, and am glad he is upset; though, as you know, I am no great believer in the lucidity and profitableness of the actual middle-class liberalism which has upset him. However, by failing and succeeding, it will gradually improve; and you must contribute all you can to improve it. Again accept my warmest congratulations and believe me, with love to your dear Mother,

"affectionately yours,

"MATTHEW ARNOLD."

This General Election of 1880 restored Mr. Gladstone to power with an overwhelming majority; and the following letter from his daughter, in which she speaks of the famous Midlothian campaign, shows the feeling, almost amounting to adoration, entertained for him by some of his supporters:

Helen Gladstone to Mrs. Flower.

"Newnham Hall. Cambridge

"April 1880.

"MY DEAR CONSTANCE,

"Many thanks. It has really been a splendid victory all through the country, and Mid Lothian is one of the most brilliant contributions. I was greatly relieved when I heard the numbers, as I could not feel as secure as the Committee and others were. Monday night was most exciting. Happily for me I was at Dalmeny from Easter Monday, and an exciting time we had of it; especially when the telegrams kept pouring in. I was delighted

about Mr Flower's success, and really joined in the telegram of congratulation, though it would have been too long to mention all the names. The enthusiasm of the Scotch was delightful, even though occasionally rather overwhelming. I was much amused and touched at the way people cared to shake hands with me, or even stroke me, as belonging to my father. Lord Rosebery's words about him at the Edinburgh banquet especially I did so like—in fact our filial love and pride has been gratified from all sides. Hannah and Lord Rosebery were both so wonderfully kind and thoughtful always and made everything as easy as possible. I came up to London with her yesterday, and came here to-day, being received by my fellow students with the most hearty sympathy. I am treated quite as an important person, in the enthusiasm of the times. Unless you come here this term—I hope you may—I am afraid I shall not see you till late in June, as I expect to be here till the 19th of June, when I say Goodbye to my Cambridge career. Mary comes to the Sidgewicks on Saturday, I hope.

“ Yours affectionately,
“ HELEN GLADSTONE.”

Constance's first mention of Gladstone in her journal is in 1879, in answer to a “ pressing invitation ” from the Roseberys :

“ CHEDDINGTON, FEBRUARY 20th : . . . Left in the afternoon for Mentmore. Met Alfred Lyttelton and Mr Lacaita, a pleasant sight. . . . Slept in poor Aunt Juliana's room. Much too smart.

“ Pleasant dinner party. Gladstone perfectly delightful. He and Lord Rosebery had a most interesting conversation. Gladstone is impressive, earnest and full of interest. He is a human being as well as a great statesman. Mary Gladstone played beautifully. Late to bed—could hardly sleep.

“ MONDAY : . . . We outstayed everyone and then drove home with the Gladstones.

“ . . . I must write down one of Mr Gladstone's sayings :
‘ Wealth is so common now that wealth alone gives no

distinction, therefore rich people who wish to be known collect pictures, or china, etc, and many try to become public servants, however small the pay.'

"This surprised me very much:—'There is too small a distinction made between noblemen's sons and commoners at the universities; the universities are a foretaste of the world where an immense difference exists.'

"Lord Rosebery came out well in conversation with Gladstone: Hannah was silent. She takes no interest in big subjects and he takes none in gossip. Gladstone admires the aristocracy of England, but his tastes are perfectly simple and severe: Lord Beaconsfield scorns the great lords, but delights in the pomp and culture that surrounds them."

She writes of a visit to Gladstone in the autumn of 1880:

"OCTOBER 1ST: . . . Arrived at Hawarden. Spent a very pleasant evening.

"SATURDAY: Had a good look round the house, enjoyed seeing Mr Gladstone's charming library, a 'temple of peace.' Walked in the beautiful park, one of the most beautiful I have ever seen. . . . Reading third volume of J. McCarthy. Marked by Mr Gladstone. Much struck by this sentence: 'It is the mixture of romance and reality that best carries a man through life.' That is Mr Gladstone himself.

"MONDAY: . . . Feel that I am in the very midst of plain living and high thinking. Feel perfectly at home and happy with the Gladstones."

The Liberal Party was in the ascendancy from 1880 until 1885, and early in the year 1881 we get the last mention of Lord Beaconsfield. Constance writes to her husband:

"Aston Clinton, Tring. April 20th.

"MY DEAREST CYRIL,

"So all is over and Lord Beaconsfield has gone to his rest. One cannot help thinking of him as a dear friend of

old days, and also as a very great statesman. I hope you will mention his name in your very *niciest, prettiest* way at one of your meetings.

"He certainly was one of the greatest men of his age, and not only loyal to his Queen and country, but also to the race from which he sprang. His racial instincts were his religion and he was true to that religion until he drew his last breath.

"The Queen will be inconsolable. She was very anxious to have seen him during his illness, but was not permitted to do so. . . .

"Ever, my dear Cyril, with much love,

"CON."

Lord Beaconsfield's health had begun to fail in 1876, when he accepted a peerage, concerning which he wrote to Lady de Rothschild :

"Hughenden Manor. Sept 6 : 76.

"DEAR LADY DE ROTHSCHILD,

"I was most pleased to see your handwriting, and thank you for your kind words.

"It is a great change, but it was a necessary one, I have no Secretaries as *maladroit* as Gil Blas, but I am not such a fool as the Archbishop of Granada ; and, for more than a year, I have felt the late hours in the House of Commons too much for me, especially as that was the period at which I had generally to exert myself.

"I hope Constance is well. Remember me kindly to her, and believe me ever with sincere regard,

"Yours

"BEACONSFIELD."

Three months before his death he was present, on January 19th, 1881, at the marriage of Mr. Leopold de Rothschild, of which there is a description from Constance, in a letter to her mother :

"Surrey House, 7 Hyde Park Place, W.

"Jan. 20.

"... Leo's speech was very pretty.... The Prince spoke twice, in answer to Lord Beaconsfield he made a

brilliant impromptu, and expressed his feelings about the whole family in such a way, that those who were present, can never forget it. His health was enthusiastically drunk, and Beacky according to Alice was so elated that he was quite playful.

" Alfred's ball was as brilliant as the transformation scene of an extravaganza, and Alfred himself was in the highest of spirits. There were about two hundred people present, the smartest and chic-est of ladies in resplendent toilettes, and all the fashionable, interesting and political men who would or could grace a ball. . . ."

The practice of exclusive intermarriage in the Rothschild family had now at last broken down, and Mr. Leopold de Rothschild had not chosen his bride from among his cousins, but his choice had fallen on an attractive Austrian Jewess, Miss Perugia, the sister of a well-known London hostess, Mrs. Arthur Sassoon.

CHAPTER X

1881-1890

*Tennyson — Burne-Jones — Whistler — Temperance
Preventive and rescue work—Politics—Gladstone—Death
of Lady Rosebery*

THE next entry of interest in Constance's journal gives an account of her visit to Lord Tennyson :

" JUNE 4th, 1881 : . . . Had the good idea of driving on to the poet laureate. Asked for Mrs. Lionel Tennyson. Was shown in to a long dark drawing-room, Eleanor came to meet us with a friendly smile and the prettiest manner, her mother-in-law, white and pale, was extended upon a sofa looking like a ghost. She just rose to receive us. After a few moments Mr Tennyson appeared, wrapped in his thick, picturesque cloak, with his shaggy curls hanging down to his shoulders. He fortunately received Cyril kindly and was most polite to us. We walked in the garden and drank tea on the lawn. Tennyson talked with us of Ireland and the terrible state of the country. He mentioned party government with horror and quoted Goldsmith's line,

" ' And he gave up to party what was meant for mankind.'

" He spoke much of the prying spirit of the tourists, and gave anecdotes of men he had waylaid in his own grounds.

" When we left, Cyril said : ' I am awfully glad to have seen you, Mr Tennyson.'

" A.T. ' Pray, never say " awfully." Do not use that

solemn word in the sense of very. It is just as bad as another word used by the British public.'

"I was sorry to leave and could have remained talking and listening to Tennyson for a long while. It was indeed a very pleasant visit.

"Drove back and embarked again on 'The Garland.'"

In June of the same year she writes :

"A glorious day and spent it most agreeably. Walked across London to my dear, precious Cobby [Miss Cobbe]. Had a good talk with her, then off to St. James' Hall. Agreeably surprised with Mrs. Booth. I think her a very wonderful woman. She impressed me greatly, her earnestness, her ardour, her single-mindedness, even her north-country accent."

Lady de Rothschild gives an amusing account of her first meeting with General and Mrs. Booth. She writes in a letter to Constance :

"... Yesterday we had tea at the Deanery, and whom do you think we found there? General and Mrs. Booth! ... O what a queer individual the former is! Mrs. Booth had a bad headache brought on by fatigue, but was all the same valiantly prepared to appear at some large assembly a little later in the evening. She has a pleasant voice and a quiet, sensible, determined manner and I can understand her producing a great effect—but the General! ... When Annie and I first arrived at the Deanery the Canon and Mrs Wilberforce were not come in yet and we found ourselves *en trois* with a long, rather slovenly-looking individual reclining in an arm chair. We interchanged one or two sentences about the weather and then the Daddy long-legs, who cannot be accused of *not* saying his prayers, fell fast asleep, and Annie and I nearly burst out laughing. At last the Wilberforces appeared with tea and children and the dear *dogs* (quite as greedy as Olga), but I felt rather rubbed up the wrong way by the *Salvation Army* and defended *parsons* and *smoking*.

"The dear Canon is evidently very much impressed by the work performed by the Salvation Army—probably

he thinks it has a good effect upon the Temperance movement."

In the August of 1881 one or two entries in Constance's journal show the excitement over the Land Bill, which was at last thrown out by the Lords.

"THURSDAY, 11th: The Land Bill is being desperately fought over in the House of Commons. Feel that they will definitely throw out the Lords' amendment.

"FRIDAY, 12th: Land Bill sent back to the Lords. Expect stormy scene in upper House.

"SATURDAY, 13th: Bill thrown out by the Lords. Intense excitement in the country. Cabinet councils.

"AUGUST 14th: Furious letter from Cyril at the firmness displayed by the Lords. I cannot help believing in a dissolution.

"AUGUST 15th: Found Cyril looking the very picture of brightness."

In September they spent their holiday on the Continent, and while in Paris they visited her cousin, Adolphe de Rothschild:

"SEPTEMBER 17th: Cyril and I went to see Adolphe's curiosities. Cyril was struck by the enormous mass of things and by the overpowering interest Alfred took, not in their beauty, but in their price and the name of the dealer they came from."

Her feeling for Rome had not changed since her first visit to the Eternal City, twelve years before. She writes:

"ROME. OCTOBER 21st, 1881: Woke up with a thrill of excitement. Actually in Rome, the most interesting and, to me, the most delightful city in the world, a place where I could spend weeks and months, where, if need be, I could make my home. . . .

"OCTOBER 22nd: The Storys' studio, where, to my utter

amazement, I heard Cyril ordering the Sardanapalus. I was fairly taken aback."

This statue, which cost £1,800, stood in a large conservatory at Surrey House, but was so huge that, when the house was given up, it was found impossible to dispose of it and finally it was sent to Scotland, to be used as hewn marble.

By this time Cyril was busy accumulating treasures for his house. He was one of the very earliest to recognize the merits of Burne-Jones from whom he ordered a large picture—the well-known "Golden Stairs." The artist writes about it :

"The Grange, North End Road, Fulham.

"... The picture of many maidens—foolish virgins—or by whatever name it is to be called—goes on nearly every day and a little. I should like you not to see it till it is nearer finish—I have drawn so many toes lately that when I shut my eyes I see a perfect rain of them."

Later on Cyril bought from him another equally large picture, "The Annunciation." Burne-Jones writes :

"DEAR CYRIL,

"We said no most reluctantly to your telegram, but the truth is I am so done up after a day's standing to work in this heat that I go to bed sometimes at half past nine—tired out—and I am and have been working very hard to finish your cartoon—feeling that every day's delay makes it more useless to you. So we can't go to you, the Maiden and I, though we are always particularly happy at your home—and rest is best for her too.

"Late this evening I hope I shall have finished it—all tomorrow I shall go over it with size to protect it—and on Wednesday morning early Vacani, if you like, can take it to you.

"By and by I shall be fat again—but I have worked on

it very hard and am tired out, and all the strength I have is used up carefully in the day.

"And this is what is called a noble life I beg you to observe.

"But I wish it were possible to burn at both ends and I could go to you to-night.

"Yours affectionately,
"E.B.J."

There is another charming letter from Burne-Jones to Mrs. Flower on his daughter's engagement.

"The Grange, West Kensington, W.

"DEAR MRS. FLOWER,

"Yes its true about the maiden, all my flattery and sensibility and loud admiration has quite failed to keep her—and so, she is going one day—a day not settled yet, perhaps not in the year—and I have gone through phases for months past, in which I was face to face with the meanest and shabbiest demons in me, so jealous.

"But she is happy and he wont take her away anywhere, but they will abide close by—after I have gnashed my teeth I sit and count my blessings.

"Now as to Saturday I daren't leave home—it is most kind of you both to have thought of it—and I should love to be with him—but my work is so backward and I am growing hurried and flurried in mind with the dread of not finishing it in time for the New Gallery that I know I mustn't leave. Every hour is important to me—but if all things had been well with my work nothing could have been devised happier for me.

"Love to Cyril,

"Ever yours sincerely,
"E.B.J."

Mr. Flower had a natural flair for talent, and he not only bought the works of Gilbert, the sculptor of Eros, while he was still almost unknown, but he appreciated Whistler long before he became the vogue.

Whistler writes a characteristic letter about his pictures :

“ Speke Hall—near Liverpool.

“ DEAR FLOWER,

“ Go round one morning to my place and look at a most lovely Nocturne in blue and silver in the Drawing room. It differs from all the others and is perhaps the most brilliant of the lot. I want 300 gs. for it—but whether you go in for hanging it in your red room or not, never mind just go and look at it for I am delighted with it myself and want to show it. So you can take any friends with you. There are three Nocturnes in the Drawing room, but *the* one I mean is a large sea piece with some fishing smacks putting off—sky lovely and the sea of an immense distance and gleaming in the soft light of the moon. This description is almost fit for the papers ! But *faites pas attention, mon cher !* Go and see if ever you saw the sea painted like that ! And the mystery of the whole thing—nothing apparently when you look at the canvas, but stand off—and I say the wet sands and the water falling on the beach in the blue glimmering of the moon—and the sheen of the whole thing—*enfin*—then I have exhausted the subject. The other two Nocturnes are not finished.

“ The famous Lucy will show you the pictures if my brother the doctor is not there, for you know my poor Mother has been very ill for a long time, though I am happy to say she is better but still confined to her bed. By the way get Tommy Jeckyll to go with you, for I want him to see my pet Nocturne.

“ With kindest regards to all,

“ Ever yours,

“ J. A. McN. WHISTLER.”

“ You know that Mitford has taken a couple of houses in the Row and is my neighbour. I don’t know him. I met your friend Gower one day in town—he said he should like to see any pictures I had, perhaps he would go with you. Anyhow write us a line and tell me how you like it.

“ The frame it is stuck in is not its own of course merely

for the moment—it will be framed in pale green gold with blue pattern.”

Constance spent the January of 1882 in Brecon, and from there she wrote in her journal :

“Saw the notice of dear Mr Osborne’s death in the paper. Although I was prepared for it, it came upon me with a horrible shock. Another old friend gone, another link with my youth, oh, how I felt it ! Cyril did not care for him, did not enjoy his bright, eager intellect, his true love of humour, his ready wit, his independent, truthful character. I hate all humbug and hypocrisy to such an extent that such a character is to me most attractive. How many a cheery laugh we have had together, how many a party has he enlivened at Aston Clinton, how nice he was about Annie’s engagement.”

By now Constance evidently shared her sister’s ardour for temperance. She, too, falls under the spell of Canon Wilberforce :

“ASTON CLINTON : FEBRUARY 1882 : Canon Wilberforce, brilliantly amusing, exhibiting intense boyish delight in all living things, full of animated discourse. What a lovely meal, what chatting and laughing, and what a bright new aspect of things the dear, genial Canon put before us. . . . A large meeting of five hundred people in the hall. No clergyman was in the room, but numbers of dissenters, and all the leading people of the Hall. The Canon took the meeting himself. He gave out the hymns, said the prayers and spoke for an hour and a half. What an address ! Intellectual, pathetic, humorous, bright, appealing, pleading, full of fire, such stirring faith, it did one good. I enjoyed it to the full and felt all the Spirit of God was with him. . . . The Canon took twenty-two pledges ! What an exciting but exhausting evening.

“FEBRUARY 20th : Cyril started for Brecon. I felt that we had now two good days before us with plenty of time for Temperance. Went into the gardens and walks in the morning with Blanche Pigott. Came home early in the

afternoon and rested and then down to the meeting. The Hall was crowded. Such an overflowing congregation! It was most impressive and touching. Twenty-six signed the pledge at the end of the meeting. Miss Piggott was asked whether she would speak again on the following night and she promised to do so."

Miss Piggott was one of the remarkable women with whom temperance brought Lady Battersea into contact. Her name appears constantly throughout the later journals.

The journal continues :

"APRIL 4th, 1882: First day of the Passover. Thought much of other years, of the old Synagogue days, the family meetings, the Piccadilly reunions. Good God! What changes!—and we could not go back.

"MAY 7th: A terrible day, begun with the most gloomy tidings, a never to be forgotten day by all Englishmen and politicians—the murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr Burke. Cyril dreadfully upset."

In July she gives a résumé of her London activities :

"This month has passed and gone. We were in the full swing of the London Season—dinner parties, evening parties and engagements of all sorts. I have hardly a moment to myself, no time for reading, still less for writing and only get hurried glimpses of my friends. We have given one large dinner, followed by a really good concert which I enjoyed, and on July 3rd we had our first bona fide ball which was pronounced a great success. I have attended two meetings for the Victoria Hall and one address by Mrs Butler; I have visited the City and also the Jewish Middle Class school: I have not done any work at the Home for a long while and seem to be living in a whirl, but occasionally pause and think deeply of the greatest problems of existence."

In September we again see how her feelings cling to the past :

" Claude's article has appeared in the *Contemporary*.¹ It appears to me very clever and interesting. I do love and venerate Claude and wish I could be his fellow worker, but I have separated myself from all the world I know amongst our own people with the one exception of my dear, sweet, angelic Mother."

" SEPTEMBER 23rd: Fast Day. Spent it with dear Motherkins. . . . With her, sunshine; without her, cold shade. Her love transforms me, her delicacy refreshes me. God be praised at having given me such a Mother! Oh, God, spare her to me!"

" All evening Cyril talked about servants, one of his favourite topics. I got heartily bored of it; for I do not believe in one class being so much better than the other. If they are careless, so are we; if they care for luxuries and comforts, so do we; if they do not do more than they need, nor do we; if they are lazy, so are we! *Tel maître, tel valet!*"

She was a delightful mistress, and adored by her staff, as can be well understood, and took the same lively interest in " her people " (as she called them) as in her friends, generally meeting them with a kindly word or an amusing remark.

She returned to London for the season and writes:

" LONDON, MAY 5th: We have been in Surrey House a week and I feel already drawn into the life and stir of the great city. Depression at first, but now that I am getting accustomed to the improvement of Surrey House I like it and find such interest amongst my friends and in all the great work that is going on. The Affirmation Bill thrown out. I could not help rejoicing, for I feel that unless we have God's help and blessing on all our work, it can never prosper."

" MAY 14th: Much to interest me. A great cause for thankfulness at being able to help in the great temperance

¹ The article referred to was entitled " Is Judaism a Tribal Religion ? "

cause, at being so helped by my precious Mother, at not being hindered by Cyril."

Her summary at the end of this season concludes :

" Temperance work in general flourishing. Will not flag! Not much time for quiet reading or study, but learn from people. Have dined since I have been in London with the Wolseleys, Broughams, Phillip Currie, Tweedmouths, Alfred, Ashburtons, Maxwells, Sassoons, Lytteltons, Annie, Mrs Joe.¹ Have entirely given up balls. Have been to one evening party at the Rallis and to one afternoon's at Blanche's."²

Early this year Lady de Rothschild grieves over the death of her brother, Nathaniel Montefiore.

" SATURDAY, MARCH 31st, 1883: Alas, alas, on Wednesday last, the 28th, my dear brother Natty died . . . at nine o'clock in the morning the kindest, gentlest of human beings was taken from us."

Constance writes :

" APRIL 3rd: What a terrible blow for poor Mamma is Uncle Natty's death. Her last brother, her only blood relation left, the only one to remind her of poor Joe, her sister, her Mother. Portman Square a house of mourning and desolation, alas, alas! . . . They all bear up wonderfully and are so good in their great grief. One can but love them and respect them. . . ."

A year later she writes :

" . . . Aunt Lionel has passed away. There, behind the dread Curtain through the gates ajar. I felt stunned. Went down to Gunnersbury and found that Mamma had just arrived. It was sad to see them one and all, prostrate under the blow. Saw dear Aunt Charlotte lying like a beautiful marble statue on her bed, her mouth in sculptured

¹ Henriette, the wife of her Uncle Joseph.

² Lady Lindsay.

repose, her broad, high brow in all the dignity of rest. I was deeply affected."

Some months later we read :

"MAY 21st, 1884: Am formulating great scheme for the West End Jews. Feel that more personal contact is required.

"Long, interesting, delightful visit from Lady Hope. Entered heart and soul into Coffee Tavern Scheme for this part of London."

This year, 1884, the village hall erected at Aston Clinton in memory of Sir Anthony was completed, and Lady de Rothschild writes :

"OCTOBER 26th. London: The Hall is quite satisfactory and pleases me much. I am truly grateful to have been able to erect this memorial of my dear Anthony ! I trust it may be of use—as well as an ornament to Aston Clinton."

Mrs. Flower spent several months of each year in her husband's Constituency at Brecon, and at one time she and her mother both studied Welsh in order to become more intimate with the people. While staying there she writes in her journal :

"SEPTEMBER 18th, 1884: I long to help these poor people, but find my way beset with difficulties. No one will put their hand to the plough. Churches and chapels abound everywhere, but where is the Christian charity ? Poor Fanny Morgan has a hard struggle, I cannot help her as I should like, I wish I could spend a year amongst these people and give them real solid help. . . ."

Matthew Arnold paid them a visit at Brecon during this month. Mrs. Flower writes :

"SEPTEMBER 24th: A red letter day, for it brought us dear Mr Arnold. What a delight ! I felt seedy and tired

but made a gallant effort and worked away in the morning at Welsh."

"SEPTEMBER 25th: The sun shone brightly, the sky a brilliant blue, this lovely country at its loveliest. We were all so radiantly happy, everyone in good spirits, Fanny Morgan enchanted at seeing a great poet like Mr Arnold. A nice cheery afternoon, a climb up the Crüg, a jolly dinner in the evening. Mr Arnold a true and delightful friend."

"And so October closes [she writes at the end of the following month] a beautiful month of colour and glorious effects. I have principally engaged in Temperance work."

Her journal continues :

"NOVEMBER: Month of gloom and short days. But oh, how pleasant in London. The lights lit early, the visitors looking in at all hours, cheery luncheons, bright dinners, glorious music, everything to lift life out of one's own narrow, limited circle."

"NOVEMBER 12th: Entirely engrossed with the coverings of my body. So expensive and so tiresome. Dinner at Burne-Jones."

At the beginning of 1885 she writes :

"I have begun a new work with tremendous ardour, and really feel as if something bona fide were started.

"It is Preventive and Rescue Work amongst the Jewish Community. Annie and I carried the point by insisting upon the necessity of having some sort of refuge for these poor girls. It has been well taken up by the Community and is now generously supported.

"Made a point of attending Mamma's Sabbath classes and of speaking to the people, who interest me enormously.

"Started a Friday evening club for girls. More work than I can possibly do. Preventive work progressing."

In her *Reminiscences* Lady Battersea describes how one evening Miss Blanche Piggott appeared unexpectedly at ten o'clock and exclaimed :

" You are the only person in this huge City of London to whom I can turn."

She went on to describe how in her Mission room two unhappy Jewish street walkers had applied to her :

" Our own people disown us [they said], their Law forbids them to receive us again, and we will not enter a Christian Home, we have no wish to join your Church, for, however bad we may be, we will not give up our own Faith."

The need for this so-called " Rescue Work " in the Jewish Community had never before been brought home to Mrs. Flower. She responded as usual to the appeal. A Committee was formed, of which her cousin, Lady Rothschild, agreed to become the President.

Mrs. Flower's summary of her London Season in 1885 shows how fully she entered into the work which she had started.

" AUGUST 12th: Saltburn by the Sea: Have spent nearly four months in London, a time of very high pressure and full life. Rescue work was what I had set myself to do, rescue work and the Sabbath School.

" I think I have succeeded to a certain extent, but I have not been able even to think of preparing my book.

" . . . Visited in the City during May and June. Have taken Hon. Secretaryship of the Society for Preventive & Rescue Work, which entailed attending all the Committees and making myself responsible for the Home, Matron, girls. Have started a Home, furnished it and engaged Superintendent and working Matron . . .

" Care less for society than I did formerly, far more for works which show some result."

Lady Battersea, until within a few years of her death, always took part either in writing the

reports of the Society or in helping in their preparation. Now the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls, Women and Children has grown to be a very large organization, having many functions and extending its work in various directions in England and abroad.

On June 28th 1885 Lady de Rothschild writes in her journal :

"... On Wednesday the 24th a peerage was given to Nathaniel who thus becomes Lord Rothschild !"

Lord Rothschild's cousin, Baron Ferdinand, stood as candidate in the by-election caused by his peerage, and on July 19th Lady de Rothschild writes :

"On the 10th Ferdy was elected M.P. for Aylesbury by a majority of 937.

"Many bothers and expenses—stables at Grosvenor Place and drains at Aston Clinton ! O dear !"

After the Redistribution Bill of 1885 Brecon became disfranchised, and that autumn Mr. Flower contested the South Beds. Division. Lady de Rothschild's diary shows the anxiety for the Liberal Party felt on this occasion :

"WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25th : Yesterday Sir Charles Dilke returned for Chelsea but many liberals defeated. Evidently a Conservative reaction has taken place. I only hope it may not have reached South Beds."

"THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26th : Conservatives continue to win—this morning's papers were full of their victories and the defeat of the liberals. Poor George Russell¹ among the fallen. I am very sorry for him and feel very nervous about Cyril's election, there is such an anti-radical mania !"

"DECEMBER 3rd : On the 1st the Aylesbury and South

¹ Rt. Hon. G. W. E. Russell, nephew of Lord John Russell. An ardent Liberal and devoted to Mr. Gladstone.

Beds. elections took place, and both Cyril and Ferdy were returned by large majorities. I went to Luton yesterday to hear the poll declared—very nervous work although we were speedily assured of Cyril's victory. I am delighted that he has not lost his favourite occupation."

As a result of Cyril Flower's political activities he was appointed Liberal Whip in the new Government of 1886, after the split in the Liberal Party over the Home Rule Bill. His wife receives the news in a somewhat half-hearted manner, and she writes to her sister :

" Aston Clinton. February 8th.

" DEAREST ANNIE,

" Many thanks for your *kind letter*. I knew you would be pleased to hear of Cyril's appointment, which came upon me like a bomb. I never expected it in the least, and could not quite make out the news which came from Tring and Mentmore first. There will be a re-election, but no contest, fortunately, and the Constituents are very pleased.

" It means real work and no hunting, no dinners and a great deal of London. But Cyril has quite made up his mind to all these things, and will devote himself with ardour to his work. What a splendid Whip he will be! His appointment has given universal satisfaction, and old Gladdy is very pleased himself.

" I do not think that we shall actually settle in London earlier, but I shall be up a good deal and may perhaps have my room arranged up-stairs. Cyril hopes always to come down on Wednesdays, and Saturdays and the other evenings he will be in 'The House.' I am, however, *quite* ready to go to Town at a moment's notice and should enjoy an early season there.

" I believe that if Sir C. D. [Sir Charles Dilke] passes through his ordeal unscathed, he will have an excellent appointment and his friends are hopeful. But as you say, it will be revolting literature for the world in general to gloat over, and I am not at all sure of the results. Cyril dines with them to-morrow.

"What do you think of the Roseberys? Hannah is triumphant and is already planning her entertainments.

"Adieu for to-day, dear Annie,

"Your,
"CON."

Sir Charles Dilke had already attained prominence in the Liberal Party, and his divorce suit created much stir in political circles. It ruined his career, but his marriage with Mrs. Pattison proved to be ideally happy. Mr. Flower took up his friend's cause with his wonted enthusiasm.

Mrs. Flower met Gladstone again in the August of 1886, at her cousin Ferdinand's house at Waddesdon, when in a letter to Annie, she describes how :

"The villagers were rewarded for their devotion, as twice yesterday Mr and Mrs Gladstone went to the parish church, (Mr Williams was absent) but a very Tory, High Church clergyman in the morning preached in favour of Disestablishment so as to prevent *Jews* and *Atheists*, bracketed together, if you please, from legislating on church matters.

"G. Russell and Cyril were much amused, particularly when the preacher began to talk of the coming election and the coming fight with no very great regard to the feelings of his distinguished listener. However, nothing daunted and struck with the beauty of the church and the good singing and the numerous congregation, Mr Gladstone returned in the evening and was so delighted with the efforts of one of the curates, who preached without notes, simply, yet eloquently, that he complimented Ferdie very warmly upon the preacher's powers, which compliment pleased Ferdie immensely."

She continues :

"Ferdie is delighted with his *M.P.-ship* and quite under the G.O.M's charm. He is so simply and naively pleased with his new position that it is quite amusing ! "

In 1888 Constance paid another visit to Hawarden. From there she writes to her mother :

"... Gladly asked tenderly after you. He says you are 'a most interesting person' and they want you to come here in the summer."

" December 8th.

"... He [Gladstone] is more keen about theology than anything else and has also been making great researches in natural history—a science he is universally recommending for boys. Alas! I always sit near the wrong ear, so find it difficult to converse with him; he has Lady Ripon on the right side, but I do my best and have had a fair amount of talk with him.

"He was shocked at J. Morley's praise of Lord Salisbury in the Newcastle speech and said: 'is he cracked?' in a deeply portentous voice! He looks shorter and fatter, and is as white or whitey as parchment. Much of the old brightness or lightness has gone, but he has said some very good things, such as, when he asked Cyril to play back-gammon with him and Cyril said 'I should like to beat an ex-Prime-Minister,' he answered: 'that has been already done.'

"She, poor dear! is very feeble and old and shaky. She lived so much in the stir and rush and excitement of political life (when she was indeed a helpmeet to him) that the existence of a recluse and a student, that he has now taken to, presents nothing but a blank to her. For the first time she feels out of it. She is in a delicate state and droops and fades under this changed existence, when he hardly requires her as he used to do.

"He has only read reviews of dear Mathew's¹ letters, and knows that he (Gladly) was mentioned in connection with 'emotional verbiage' which he did not much like. I do not think he would care for them—nor quite understand their delicate humour! Alas! I find that the letters are not appreciated as much as they ought to be..."

¹ Matthew Arnold.

At the same time she writes of Gladstone to her friend, Miss Lawrence :

"He is just as happy as he ever was as Prime Minister, and loves his books with all his heart. His little grandchild is also a great attraction, and she prattles away to him without the slightest fear. He lives a great part of the day in his library, where I feel inclined to follow him for a talk. I had intended bringing my cousin's (Mr Montefiore's) article for his perusal, but unfortunately left it at home. . . ."

In 1889 Mr. Gladstone accompanied Mrs. Yorke on her yacht, *The Garland*, on what was virtually an electioneering cruise of the west of England. Constance and her mother were not on the yacht, but met it on its arrival first at Dartmouth and then at Torquay. Both describe these meetings in their journals. Mrs. Flower writes :

"DARTMOUTH, JUNE 7th : . . . The little town was full of stir, brightness, bands playing, a triumphal arch, flags fluttering in the breeze, illumination. One yacht after another came up the Dart, but not until ten o'clock did the 'Garland', brilliant with electric light put in her appearance. Cyril, B. Brett, and A. [Arnold] Morley all looking bright and cheery. Early on board, found that wonderful old couple [the Gladstones] full of talk and brightness. . . ."

"MONDAY : . . . Quick little journey to Torquay. A first rate reception, a procession which lasted for nearly an hour, luncheon at an hotel then big meeting. 'G.O.M.' spoke well, but it was not to my mind a very inspiring speech, perhaps because I am not quite in harmony with the one subject, Home Rule. A long, cold drive home for three hours in an open carriage. A kind of triumphal procession all the way."

Lady de Rothschild describes Gladstone :

"MONDAY, JUNE 11th : . . . Yesterday we spent several hours on board the yacht with the G.O.M. and Mrs.

Gladstone. He is a wonderful man—so full of energy—and immensely interested in the present, whilst remembering, not only every historical and political incident of the past, but every book he has read and almost every anecdote he has heard. He is very courteous in manner and pleasant in conversation and Mrs Gladstone is extremely good-natured, considerate and unselfish. . . .”

A little later she writes :

“ SUNDAY, JUNE 23rd : Yesterday Gladstone paid me a visit—and found Mrs Perry, Mrs Astley, Marie¹ and Maude !¹ What would *he* have felt if the hearts of those rabid Unionists and anti-Gladstonians could have been suddenly opened to his view ? Fortunately they remained veiled by the amenities of society, and my distinguished visitor talked and laughed most agreeably in utter unconsciousness of the feelings of his auditors. It was an amusing little episode.”

Soon after we catch a farewell glimpse of Lady de Rothschild’s little dachshund, from which she had been almost inseparable. At Aston Clinton she writes :

“ To-day we return to London with poor dear Olga very ill—her last journey. It is very sad to lose my faithful, constant companion and dear, little, loving friend ; how much I shall miss her, both here and in what will now be my solitary home at Grosvenor Place.”

We cannot leave Olga without quoting the verse of thanks from G. W. E. Russell to Lady de Rothschild and Constance :

“ ONE in the unison of heart and heart,
One in the joy your gentle lives impart,
One in the equal love of fervent friends,
One in all gracious deeds and worthy ends,
Share, kindly souls, the thanks of him you feed,
A friend in truth—perchance a friend in need,

¹ The daughters of Lady Elizabeth Biddulph.

Who hails, as choicest boon of favouring fate,
The sweet, soft grace of charming chocolate.
His frugal feast the dulcet dainties crown
Like 'OLGA' richly stuffed, like 'OLGA' russet brown.

In the spring of 1890 Mr. Gladstone had been a guest at Aston Clinton, and Lady de Rothschild writes in her journal :

"APRIL 9th, 1890: Yesterday evening Mr and Mrs Gladstone, Mr and Mrs [Augustine] Birrell, Lady Lothian, Mr Gilbert¹ and George Russell appeared—all in good spirits and ready to be amusing and to amuse.

"Mr Gladstone wonderful as ever in mind and body, deeply interested at this moment in his theological work, and in all that tends to strengthen the hold of the Bible upon Mankind. But though his religious views are, I fancy, nearly as orthodox as ever, he appears to be far more liberal-minded and tolerant than of yore. He gave us an interesting account of Bright and Cobden, much preferring the latter to the former, but he said it was beautiful and touching in the extreme to see Bright's intense grief at Cobden's funeral."

The following month Lady Battersea writes in her journal :

"MAY 16th, 1890: Visit to Norwich with Mr G[ladstone]. Visited the mustard works of Mr Colman and the excellent schools for the children of the operatives, very much struck with the latter. A huge meeting in the evening. Seven thousand people. Mr G. spoke for one hour and twenty minutes. It did not ring very true to me. Politicians are too vain and self-seeking. Politics are disappointing. . . ."

Mr. Flower's position as Liberal Whip was most arduous. Home Rule had already split up the Party, and later on there came the catastrophe

¹ The sculptor.

of the Parnell scandal. Concerning this latter, George Russell wrote to Mrs. Flower :

“ 18 Wilton Street, S.W.

“ December 3rd, 1890.

“ DEAR MRS. FLOWER,

“ The violent excitement has been succeeded by a lull, which gives one time to reflect and moralize.

“ In the interests of the Community, I think it is a good thing that P's true character should be unmasked. It always irritated me to see the confusion between the Cause and the Men : the Liberal party accepting the Cause, and then idealising and idolising all the people connected with it. Of course one does not rejoice that P. is a scamp ; but, as he is one, it is better for us all that he should be recognized as such.

“ Even in the narrow party point of view, I do not know that we are losers. The strength of Liberalism is in the virtuous dissenters ; the middle and lower middle classes. They will only support what they believe to be the moral Cause ; but when a leader appeals powerfully to their moral sense, they are enthusiastic for him. This Mr G. has now done, and I believe that he has greatly strengthened his hold by doing so. The worse P. behaves to him the better in that point of view it is, for nothing would be so discreditable and fatal as a patched-up agreement or compromise or arrangement with him, after what has passed. And his manifesto has happily made that impossible.

“ I have seen Mr and Mrs G. He was very grave, sad, quiet, and dignified and entirely free from rancour or violence. Mrs Drew¹ is here. I make out from her that they all positively believed in P's innocence, and never doubted till they saw the reports of the trial. Imagine the shock and surprise to them ! But what is the use of Herbert, unless he keeps them informed of what is going on, when it may so vitally affect them ?

“-When they read the trial, they assumed that P.

¹ Gladstone's daughter.

would scarcely want a hint, but would take himself off at once. That he could have the hardihood to stick on and embarrass Mr G. evidently never crossed their minds. Their disappointment and disillusionment are the really sad part of the affair.

“Yours sincerely,

“G. W. E. RUSSELL.”

As usual some part of each year was spent abroad. In October 1887 Mrs. Flower and her husband visited Spain and she writes of him at Granada :

“Cyril has been buying lovely stuffs here. He still has the mania and always the taste and the knowledge for such things.”

And the next day she writes :

“Alas, left beautiful, poetical, romantic, lovely Granada ! Felt like Boabdil when he was turned out of his beautiful kingdom.”

In 1889 she joined her sister at Nice for a cruise in the Mediterranean in *The Garland*. She is delighted as ever with Italy and the people she meets there, and describes

“a very jolly, amusing party, all laughing and rattling away as if we had known each other for months. How easy foreign society is.”

The following year she once more visited Oberammergau, where she

“called upon Joseph Mayer, simple, grand and majestic as ever. Had a long talk with him, impressed by his words and manner, he talked to us much of Farrar.”

That winter she writes :

“NOVEMBER 19th, 1890 : Sad confirmation of all our fears—death of Hannah Rosebery.”

Reviewing her cousin's life, she describes how

"at the age of twenty-seven she married one of the cleverest men in England; a man who has risen to the highest prominence in the political world; a man who, if he lives, will assuredly be Prime Minister.

"Four charming children were born to them. They were admired, respected, envied, always to the fore. What a career opened before them! Leading the Radical Party, so linked with the people; Peers of the Realm, thus part of England's proud aristocracy; frequent and cared for guests at Windsor; known and appreciated by the great; distinguished by Europe.

"She made an admirable, unselfish, loving wife, a less fond, devoted mother, though she deeply loved the children, but her great part of wife she played to perfection. . . .

"I admired her heroic qualities, but I did not love her dearly. She was not one of my dearest friends! Still, her death has come to me as a terrible shock. I can think of nothing else. It is with me when I wake and during the day every moment."

On November 25th she describes the funeral:

"... I took Lady Reay and Lily Harcourt into the boudoir where sat poor Lucy and Louisa¹ in their deep anguish. . . .

"Silence, grim silence, reigned. I was determined to break it, and with Louisa's permission I read the twenty-third, one hundred and third, forty ninth and fifty-first Psalms and some passages from Isaiah. I longed to offer up prayer, but did not do so, not knowing in what spirit it might be taken. . . . I felt more than ever how much we women could do if we were only trained to minister at such times! Why could we not have gathered all the servants round us and had a proper little service that would have been pleasing and a help for us? But with us religion always seems inarticulate or pushed into the background.

"There seems true and heart-felt regret at poor Hannah's decease. She was a personality, and impressed herself upon most of those who came in contact with her. . . .

¹ Miss Lucy and Miss Louisa Cohen, Lady Rosebery's aunts.

Her husband . . . has friends everywhere, on both sides of the House, in all countries of the world, in the Court and amongst the people. He has genius, tact, feeling, power, speech, a wonderful knowledge of men, great intellectual grip, a fund of humour ! What a position he holds, unique amongst men. His wife adored him, was justly proud of him."

It is not customary for Jewish women to attend funerals, but it is usual for prayers to be said at the house, and sometimes an address is given by a Rabbi, at which the household attends.

CHAPTER XI

1890-1893

*Overstrand—Letters from Morley and Haldane—Queen
Victoria at Grasse—Peerage—Offer of New South Wales
Governorship*

BEFORE continuing with the journal, perhaps it will be well to give a short account of the setting in which, from 1889, so much of the life it records took place.

The Flowers and Lady de Rothschild had spent a few weeks of several summers at the little watering town of Cromer. Constance's friend, Lady Lothian (the sister of Lady Brownlow), lived a few miles away in her beautiful Elizabethan house at Blickling.

Mr. Flower took a fancy to the district, and in 1888, at the suggestion of Lord Suffield who lived close by at Gunton, he bought two jerry-built houses, standing in a bleak field near the neighbouring hamlet of Overstrand. These soon came under his transforming wand, and Overstrand became more and more of a permanent home; for, as Mr. Flower lost some of his zest for hunting, Buckinghamshire appealed less than formerly to him.

With his usual flair, he had decided on Sir Edwin Lutyens, then quite a young architect,

to help him in constructing what Lady Betty Balfour describes as his "Aladdin's Palace."

The poet, Mr. Locker-Lampson,¹ was already living at Cromer, and his son, Commander Oliver Locker-Lampson, often reminded me of his and his sister's delight as children in going over to the "Pleasaunce"—as Lord Battersea's home was christened by Lord Morley, after it had outgrown its original name of "The Cottage." One of Lord Battersea's great attributes was his fondness and happy manner with children. (I wonder whether Commander Locker-Lampson's memory of Lady Battersea partly acted as an incentive to his generous and enthusiastic support of Professor Einstein and the Jewish refugees?) The half-sister of the Commander was the wife of Augustine Birrell, a Liberal colleague of Mr. Flower, and the Birrells finally bought a house at Sheringham, a few miles off.

A letter from Cyril Flower to Lady de Rothschild gives a spirited description of the Pleasaunce and of Mr. Birrell's instalment at Sheringham in the early 'nineties.

"The Pleasaunce. Sunday night.

"DEAR LADY DE ROTHSCHILD,

"This place conduces to a philosophic spirit, and a gentle Westerly breeze, brilliant sunshine, bright blue sky, dancing waves and Birrell's delightful 'Res Judicatæ' are capital reminders that Politics, important as they are, are not the whole aim and duty of man. Have you read 'Res Judicatæ'? If not, for once take my advice and read it directly. You will find them so full of humour, admirably written, in every way sympathetic. The 'Richardson' and the 'Gibbon' are new, the others I think had been published before in some form or other.

"The Pleasaunce is now open Sundays to a very appre-

¹ Author of "London Lyrics" and editor of "Lyra Elegantiarum."

ciative throng, of men and maidens, children and nurses—'no dogs or perambulators' are admitted but it is not necessary to add 'do not touch the flowers.' 350 people¹ came in last Sunday, and walked and talked and flaunted and flirted and read hymns and Psalms, and spiritual songs, some by David and others, they say, by Kipling. So I took my parable and my pilgrim's bottle (with a little *weak* Whiskey and soda in it), to drink Annie's and the Canon's health in, and drove early to Sheringham where, like one of the early apostles, I sat among the fishermen on the beach and ate the 'fragments which remained' from my dinner of the night before. 'Rubbish' accompanied me and thoroughly enjoyed the outing. But he particularly begs me to say that although 'Mr. Tapageur'² was not always as courteous to him as might have been, he bears no malice, and wishes to heap coals of fire upon his head by receiving him here as soon as possible with *jambes ouvertes*; he will show him mystery after mystery, and, though there is no sport among the rabbits, black-birds, thrushes, wagtails and every shade of cat offer a never ending variety of amusement, and he can have a 'lark' with him whenever he wills.

"I spent an hour with the author of 'Obiter Dicta' who is almost as enchanted with his new house as is his wife—but he says that now the strain and the excitement of the last few months are over (though he has had to bear very little of either) he feels quite exhausted and done up, and then he sat under the shade of his own Cottage—with a pair of pumps on that reminded one painfully of London and evening parties; he said out of his little *parterre* he would not budge an inch!

"Mrs Birrell bubbles over with happiness, and domestic pride, four children clustered round her, and it may have been that an inexperienced eye was mistaken, but somehow it seemed to me that either the last one had not been quite forgotten, or that another was already on its way! An offsprung no doubt of Neptune and the North Wind.

¹ In 1925 we read in Lady Battersea's journal: "Tremendous day in the gardens, 1716 people." The entrance money went to charities.

² Lady de Rothschild's dachshund.

"I am coming up to London Tuesday, and shall most likely pay you a visit about tea time, as my train arrives Liverpool Street 4.30. Till then farewell and hoping that you are *really and truly* yourself again

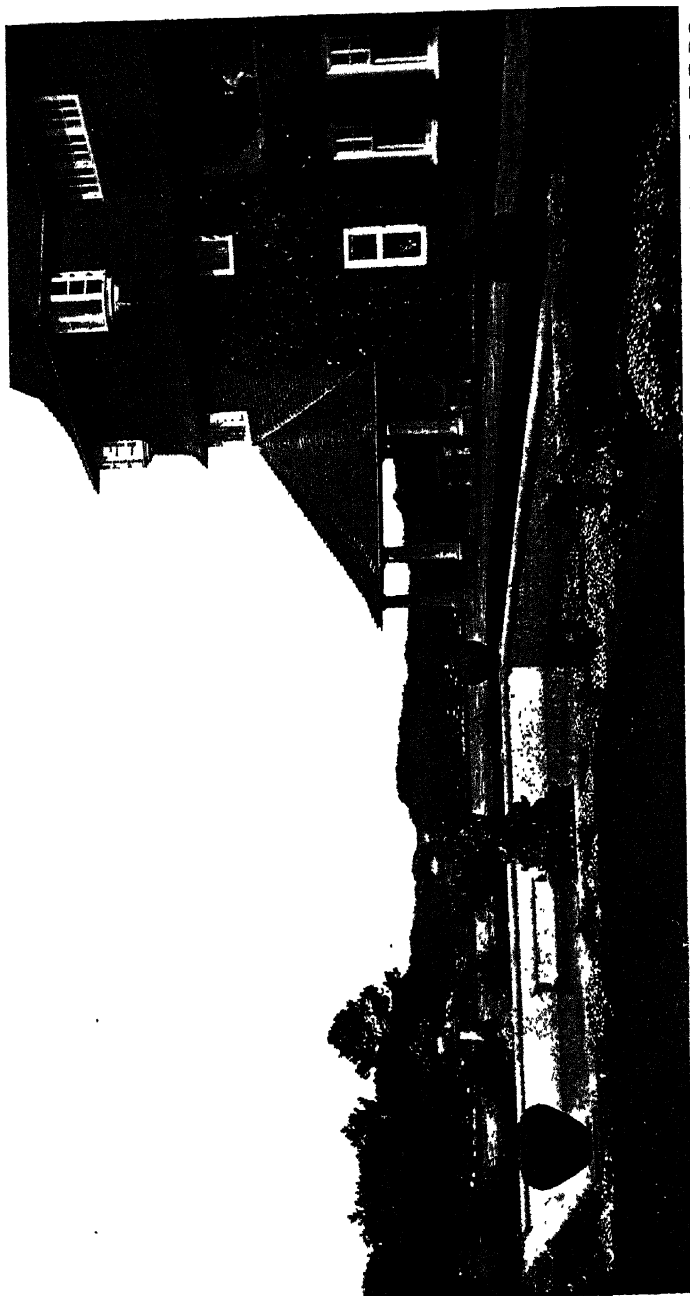
"Ever believe me most affectionately yours,

"CYRIL."

Gradually, partly owing to the Pleasaunce as well as to the fine air, Overstrand became fashionable. Lord Hillingdon employed Sir Edwin to build him a large house there. His wife belonged to the neighbourhood, being a daughter of Lord Suffield. Then Sir Frederic Macmillan, the publisher, settled close by, and one of the most charming houses was built, under Mr. Flower's auspices, for Mr. Hare, the actor. (It has now been for many years inhabited by Mrs. Wilson, the oldest member of the Buxton family.) Sir George Lewis, the well-known solicitor, constructed his "Danish Pavilion," overlooking the sea. He was a friend of most of the principal Liberal Members, while his wife had a large literary and artistic circle. Through them the Edgar Speyers were attracted to the place, and built an expensive and fantastically furnished house on the sea front.¹

Hitherto this corner of Norfolk round about Cromer had been chiefly owned by people of Quaker origin, often notable for their public spirit and philanthropy, Buxtons, Gurneys, Barclays and Hoares and their various offspring. There they lived quiet country lives. Most of them were bankers or men of business, either in Norwich or London, but they used to go down for the shooting, and their children met constantly during the holidays for cricket, bathing, expeditions and parties of all descriptions.

¹ Lady Battersea gives a full description of her Overstrand neighbours in her *Reminiscences*.



THE PLEASANCE, OVERSTRAND

Olive Edis Galsworthy. F.R.P.S.

The balcony from which Lady Battersea watched the visitor

Since the War the aspect of Overstrand has changed once more. The descendants of the old inhabitants in many cases still live in the vicinity, but most of the more sophisticated new-comers have now disappeared. Even the coast-line has been broken away by the inroads of the sea, until the Overstrand Hotel, built at the height of the popularity of the village, now stands tottering on the brink of the cliff.

The Edgar Speyers' house has remained uninhabited since 1915, the "Danish Pavilion" has changed hands many times, the Locker-Lampsons' house has become an hotel, Lord Hillingdon's, within the last two years, has been converted into a convalescent hospital, and now the present owner of the Pleasaunce is trying to sell it.

But, in 1889, Lady Battersea, on first settling at Overstrand, writes :

"THE COTTAGE, OVERSTRAND: . . . Little cottage quite lovely, like a Venetian Palace is very tiny. Beautifully and tastefully furnished, admiring it immensely. . . ."

The following year she was somewhat less delighted by her new country home. She writes :

"OVERSTRAND, AUGUST 28th: Came down with my Mother . . . the best companion I have ever had. Little Cromer reached at last. Greeted by fierce storms of rain. Cyril at the station, with his rubicund, cheery, joyous face, seemed happy and pleased to see us. Rain came pelting down. Cold intense. My cottage full of unpleasant draughts. The little garden a great success, cheery evening.

"AUGUST 30th: Cyril's birthday. Very cheery and happy, but, oh, this is an odious place, cold, draughty, windy, bitter, bleak, almost ugly—I dislike it heartily. Why did we ever come here? "

As Liberal Whip, Cyril had to entertain largely,

and he could never resist beautifying his houses, an expensive taste; Mrs. Flower writes in 1891:

" JANUARY 19th: Cyril tells me that we are spending too much. He has been drawing largely upon his capital. . . . The fact that some of my heavy bills must remain unpaid for weeks, nay, months, is a sickening prospect. I now *declare* that I will not order any new thing from any dressmaker or milliner or tailor between this and July; I will do my utmost to retrench in every way. . . . Neither Surrey House nor Overstrand ever gave me any real satisfaction. Why did we not begin modestly in a small house with few servants, without a flourish of trumpets? "

However, the financial crisis does not appear to have weighed very heavily on her husband, as that summer she writes:

" OVERSTRAND, AUGUST 14th, 1891: Came down . . . to my seaside home, feeling pleasantly expectant. A very hot, glowing, fiery day, a stuffy atmosphere in the train with clouds of dust. Dear Cyril met me at the station with Fly-away in the cart. We came to our cottage—oh, what a transformation scene! I was simply astounded; I could not believe such a change possible. A large garden, a pretty drawing-room, a comfortable sitting-room, no draughts, no cold anywhere. We sat outside until a late hour.

" AUGUST 21st: Leo and Marie¹ came late. Jolly evening."

Writing to her sister, she describes a visit to the remarkable old Lady Buxton, the doyenne of the family.

" The Cottage, Overstrand, Cromer.

" 2nd October.

" . . . Yesterday we—that is Blanche² and I, accomplished a visit to dear old Lady Buxton. Blanche,

¹ Her cousin, Mr. Leopold de Rothschild, and his wife.

² Lady Lindsay.

particularly anxious to see her, as in old days both Aunt Hannah Mayer¹ and Aunt Louisa² were great friends of the Gurneys. Lady Buxton instantly remembered all about 'H. Mayer,' her very dear friend, and was greatly interested in seeing her daughter. So the visit was a success. Blanche was quite at her best, gentle, respectful and amiable, and looked quite pretty, but the Buxtons looked with astonishment at her flowered silk tea gown, her orange-black cloak and her small fly-away hat. She does not object to the wind outside the house—and very rough it is—but shivers indoors at those terrible and maddening draughts that make the carpets dance and the blinds wave and that find one out in every room. . . ."

Not unnaturally her opinion of "The Cottage" changes with the weather. Another day she writes :

" . . . Glorious weather. Bored by visitors. Called upon Morley. He is really charming. Like Overstrand better than I thought I should."

The following day she writes :

" . . . A great deal of music ; much conversation with John Morley, who is fast becoming a true friend.

" Mrs Asquith died on the 11th of the month of typhoid after only three weeks' illness. Oh how sad, a youthful life taken."

Only a few days before Mrs. Asquith's death, Mr. Haldane³ wrote to Lady Battersea :

" I was very glad to get your excellent letter—and to know that you are having a good time. John Morley writes : ' The Cyrils are next door—the very best neighbours that ever were known,' so I judge that you have long talks.

" A telegram from Asquith has just come ' Going on slowly but satisfactorily.' This is good—of course one

¹ The Hon. Mrs. Fitzroy.

² Baroness Charles de Rothschild.

³ Afterwards Viscount Haldane of Sloane.

never knows what a day may bring forth in a case of typhoid, but so far there appear to be no complications. She belongs to the order of good women. I wish someone who was entitled to—a sort of spiritual Lady Brownlow—would start a Society of ‘Good Souls’—Cleverness not a disqualification, but no premium set on it, or any one sort of success. Would the conversation sometimes flag? I fear so. Yet there is much to be said for such a Society, and Mrs. Asquith would be high in it. As some one said the other day ‘She has a heart of gold.’ ”

After hearing of her death he writes again :

“It is very sad. She was much to him. Only those who have lived with them know how much.

“It is ten years since they became my intimate friends, and I know no one who has been more the embodiment of gentle goodness than she was. I do not believe there ever crossed her mind one wish to keep him back that he might be nearer to her. She was not brilliant or forcible, but she had a heart that led her by a short and direct way to what the philosophers reach only by round-about and tedious paths. Of such as she was is the Kingdom of Heaven.

“He is a strong man—a very strong one—but this sorrow will lie heavily upon him—left alone in the world with his motherless children. I know enough to be sure that no one can ever really take her place for him.”

When Mr. Asquith was quite a young barrister, Lord Battersea always recognized his extraordinary ability, and he had also appreciated Mrs. Asquith’s qualities. At Christmas the following year he persuaded Lady de Rothschild to have the five children to stay at Aston Clinton.

The Flowers sometimes had more society than even they wanted, wonderful hosts that they were. Every tiny lodging-house would be filled with visitors, often distinguished in one way or another. Mr. Flower threw two of these small houses into

one, where his brother's eldest daughter, Mrs. Head (Daisy), used to go with her husband and children; and various of her brothers and sisters gathered around them, enjoying the cricket and tennis to be had in the Pleasaunce grounds. Mr. Flower's sister, "Clara," Mrs. Brand, used to go to a cottage in the village in early days, until her husband took larger houses for shooting; while her only daughter, "Dolly," was one of the most frequent, and certainly one of the most welcome, guests at the Pleasaunce. Later on, one of Mr. Flower's happiest thoughts was to furnish a flat over the garage as a guest-house, but at first the Cottage used to be lent to his friends. Two letters from Mr. Morley show how much the loan was appreciated:

"The Cottage, Overstrand, Cromer.

"14th April, 1892.

"MY DEAR CYRIL,

"Here I am in your room, writing at your table. It is gloriously sunny and fresh, though stingingly cold.

"We found all delightfully cosy on our arrival—and the rooms quite perfect. We had some tea, and felt as like Jack Horner as possible. You are, as I have said before, the very kindest and most thoughtful man that ever was born.

"I cry out for Mrs Flower, though, and Lady de Rothschild. The rooms recall those delightful days last summer, and give me a fit of gentle melancholy, which is an inseparable ingredient of true happiness. And I seem to listen for your cheery voice and radiant presence, back from your sea bathe. Oh, death in life, the days that are no more.

"My wife declines to obey your injunction to rest and [hunts?] all out. We are awfully careful, and sit amid such fine things, like a mechanic in his Sunday clothes.

"Goodbye, dear Cyril,

"Your grateful friend,

"J.M."

" Saturday, 23rd April, 1892.

" Goodbye, my dear Cyril. We're just off—most sorry to leave—after a holiday which has been an immense refreshment, in spite of the weather. Yesterday was delicious—and to-day promises to be as good.

" Your Cottage is perfection, and nothing could exceed the friendliness of your worthy Mrs. Ham. She has been as kind and attentive as possible.

" I have drunk none of your wine—but I've read your books, burned your coals, consumed your candles—and *should* have worn the crimson and scarlet suit of clothes, but most inconsiderately you had not left them out. I believe we've done no harm—and left no disagreeable traces of our invasion—beyond a trifle of cigarette-smoke in your own room, which I have mainly inhabited.

" A thousand thanks to both of you.

" Ever yours,

" J. MORLEY."

" The flowers from Aston Clinton were splendid. I'm giving them by way of Altarpiece."

In 1905 he writes :

" August 16th, 1905.

" DEAR LADY BATTERSEA,

" When Gerald Balfour told me last Saturday at Westminster that he was coming to stay at Cromer, I was intensely jealous, indignant, and resentful, that you did not ask poor me!!! Now your kindest of cards heaps coals of fire on my head. But alas, alas, it is too late. We are pledged to Scotland at the end of this week, for a couple of short visits. Then home to my library, where I have collected some nine or ten thousand volumes. Of these I have read only two thousand, and I've only three or four years in which to read the remaining seven or eight thousand!! Think how busy I must be.

" But I love my friends, all the same, and none more than the pair who made life so delightful at Cromer fourteen years ago. Yea, fourteen.

" Love to Cyril.

" Ever your friend,

" JOHN MORLEY."

At the beginning of her acquaintance with Mr. Morley, Lady de Rothschild writes in her journal :

" SEPTEMBER 9th, 1891. Overstrand : . . . The social feature this year at Overstrand is John Morley's vicinity to the Cottage ! He is a delightful addition to our little party, ever good natured and ready to charm one with his interesting conversation."

Both Constance and her mother seem to have discussed many subjects with Mr. Morley, and for Lady de Rothschild he wrote the following definition of Holiness :

" By Holiness do we not mean something different from virtue ? It is not the same as Duty, still less is it the same as religious belief. It is a name for an inner grace of nature, an instinct of the soul, by which, though knowing of earthly appetites and worldly wisdom and passions, the spirit, purifying itself of these, and independent of reason, arguments and the struggles of the will, dwells in living, patient and confident communion with the seen and the unseen Good.

" In this region moves the ' Imitatio '.

" J. MORLEY. August 1892."¹

During the 'nineties, Mrs. Flower received several letters from Mr. Haldane. He writes magnanimously of his broken engagement :

" 10 Old Square, Lincoln's Inn.

" 15. Dec., 1890.

" . . . The rest of your letter touched me deeply. You have understood. The succession of the saddest period of my life to what was by far the happiest has brought with it new knowledge and a deeper sense of responsibility. I dare not now look back. These weeks of perfect joy have left a memory which is a permanent possession, and I think

¹ This definition, in much the same words, appeared in a number of the *Nineteenth Century* at a later date.

of them with pride and thankfulness. But beautiful as they were, they were weeks of a narrower life than that which has come since. I did not see it then, but I see it now. To try to live for others for the sake of one other person, is not the same thing as to try to find life simply in living for others. It was my fate and my privilege to be very near to a woman of exquisitely fine perceptions. I was very happy and I think that she was also. And then came a moment when the truth—as reflection has disclosed it to me—must have flashed in on her, and with that moment came the crash. With some people the situation might then have been saved—not with us two. How and in what form she saw the inadequacy of the basis I do not know, and probably she does not. All had been bright till then. But somehow a fine instinct carried her away from me. The failure was my fault, not hers. Had my eyes not been clouded it would not have been. And to me at least, and probably to her too, the lesson was one which had to be learned, and terrible as has been the price, it is not too great to pay for it.

“The world has its views about these things, and I dare say they are in the main true. But they do not apply to this case, and I wish to tell you so that you may understand her and know that she was wiser than I was. Much as she is to me, I cannot and will not let myself wish that she should have acted contrary to the best instincts of her nature.”

Other letters give some of Lord Haldane's views on religion and literature, and therefore may be worth quoting.

“Cloan Den. Auchterarder, N.B.

“5th September, 1890.

“DEAR MRS FLOWER,

“These talks on paper have this merit about them, that there is no temptation to waste words. So, as I cannot come to luncheon with you at Surrey House, I just take up a sheet of paper with a good conscience.

“The question in your postscript once came close home to me, and has remained in varying intensity for seventeen years. I was drawn to the mechanical point of view when

I was seventeen, and did not get out of it properly until I had learned to understand Kant's philosophy six years later.

"Of course other people do not all accept the criticism of these thinkers on materialism. But they do appear to me to deliver us from it out and out, and to give us back, not the old crude beliefs, but all that is best and most real in them. God ceases to be a being far away—'magnified and non-natural man'—and becomes the Spirit in which we live and move and have our being. And Immortality is no longer the supernatural continuance of the life of the body, but from the point of view which raises the soul above the categories of death, begins on this side of the grave. I should advise anyone who wanted to have this 'writ large' to read Fichte's *Bestimmung des Menschen* (well translated *sub titulo* 'The Vocation of Man' in Smith's translation of Fichte's 'Popular Works.') Also Berkeley's *Principles of Human Knowledge* might be read along with it, and then Green's *Prolegomena to Ethics*. But nothing will give a sense of security excepting to begin at the beginning and work for a couple of years systematically at philosophy—beginning with Berkely and Hume and ending with Hegel. And this is a bit of good hard work. It took me longer to do, and I do not know that I have done it yet. But I was very young and had no one to guide me, and now there is a lot of additional literature, such as Caird's *Kant* and Green's *Introduction to Hume*, which makes this most difficult part of metaphysics more easy to disentangle.

"I feel the force of what you say about the French Novelists. It is a great evil in literature and in life too that one passion and the sins connected with it should bulk so largely in the imagination. I think that people exaggerate grossly the importance of both. The passion of love is one important spring of action in life, but certainly not the most important, nor of the highest quality. And the sin of immorality, although like all sin, bad and black and importing the complete temporary negative of what is highest, is not more bad and black, more completely this negative, than many other sins which men and women commit with social impunity. As far as

I can judge, there have been many times in the world's history—e.g. those of the New Testament—when the popular judgment about these things was juster and dwelt less morbidly on one to the exclusion of half a dozen other phases of life, than is the case to-day. I think that the education of women, as it has been of late, has something to do with all this exaggeration. Marriage means too much for them. And the training which they may get, if all other walks of life are thrown open to them, may do much to help it. But here lies a big subject.

"I envy you your old knowledge of Schiller's poetry. What a gain it is to have assimilated something like this. Yet Schiller is not wide enough to satisfy us.

"Yours very sincerely,

"R. B. HALDANE."

"House of Commons. 4 March, 1891.

"DEAR MRS FLOWER,

"I began a letter to you yesterday, but it was so unsatisfactory I tore it up.

"The Brownlow—Granby—Pembroke—Rayleigh—Balfour—Cust—Robert Cecil—Brodrick dinner went off and reached a fair level of interesting news-fairing. I liked what I saw of Lady B. [Brownlow] but I shall not know how much till I have seen more. I sat between Lady Granby and Miss Cust and afterwards had an hour's talk with Lady Pembroke—

"'Prophete rechts—Prophete links,
Das Welt-Kind in der Mitte.'

"Pressure in the Law Courts has prevented me from being as much down here at the House as I ought to have been, and I must do more duty shortly.

"'Die Gestalt dieser Welt vergeht, und ich möchte mich nur mit dem beschäftigen was bleibende Verhältnisse sind.' I wonder sometimes what Goethe meant by 'bleibende Verhältnisse.'

"This is a more melancholy letter than represents what I feel at the moment. But one cannot help reviewing life and ask what one is adding to the store of humanity. Day follows day and at the close one is almost invariably

constrained to admit that one has added nothing. It is not the best of existence, even though one is content with these circumstances.

“ Yours very sincerely,

“ R. B. HALDANE.”

Mr. and Mrs. Flower had done a good deal of work for Princess Louise in connection with the recreation classes which the latter had organized, and in 1891 the Princess asked Lady Battersea to accompany her to Grasse, where Queen Victoria was staying. Mrs. Flower's kind, autocratic and clever cousin, Miss Alice de Rothschild (the sister of Baron Ferdinand) had put her garden at Her Majesty's disposal.

From letters and journals we get the following account of the visit :

“ Villa Victoria, Grasse,

“ Alpes Maritimes.

“ March 28th, 1891.

“ DEAREST MOTHER,

“ Very many thanks for your dear, kind letter. I was so glad to receive it. The Princess wishes me to put into the proper language that she expected you to send her your *love*, and she transmits hers through me.

“ Oh ! the wind is blowing, the glass is falling, the dust is whirling and poor Alice has been pasting up doors and windows, reminding me of our Overstrand experiences.

“ There are some gleams of sunshine, but yesterday the sky was grey and overcast and the Queen requested to be taken a sheltered drive . . .

Easter Sunday.

“ A glorious morning, the wind has fallen and the mountains stand out clear and distinct against a brilliantly blue sky. Such a sky, such floods of light, that whilst we open the windows, we are obliged for our eyes' sakes to close the green shutters.

“ I have very little time at my disposal, for Alice or the Princess is generally requiring me to walk or talk or do

something for one or the other lady. Then I have to entertain visitors and to do the amiable to the Queen's household.

"H.M. I have only seen as yet from a distance, but hear she is very well, and she enjoys herself in Alice's spacious grounds. As for Alice, she is quite *wonderful*. She is on her legs from morning until night, walks miles, up and down hill, and gives her orders to the Inspector of Police, the Royal coachmen, her foremen and workmen, in the voice, with the manner of a 'Napoleon.' As a surprise to the Queen she has just ordered another mountain road to be levelled and widened, and this is to be done in *three* days, which means, building up small walls, picking out huge stones, covering the smaller ones with macadam and *turning a stream*.

"The men here will simply do anything for the Queen of England . . ."

"Grasse. March 31st, 1891.

"Yesterday, in spite of rather a cruel mistral that began to blow at midday after a lovely and windless morning, the '*Bataille*' or '*Cavalcade des fleurs*' was quite a success . . .

"After luncheon all Alice's guests marched off to the Hotel. Her Majesty received us very graciously and invited us to see the 'march past' from her balcony, which was decorated and covered in for the occasion . . .

"The Queen enjoyed herself immensely and we handed her the flowers—provided by Alice—for throwing at the passers by, and she was much amused when one of the small bouquets came flying up from below and hit her sunshade. The procession cheered as they passed and called out '*Vive la Reine*' enthusiastically. One man on horseback held up a long box on the top of a pole. I proceeded to put a bouquet into it, upon which he remonstrated with me, saying: '*je ne desire pas des fleurs, mais de la monnaie*.'

"This remark I had to repeat to Her Majesty who said: 'we must be better provided upon the return.' So a gold piece was given to the Queen, and when our friend came back we guided his long pole to Her Majesty's chair,

though she said pathetically: 'I am afraid I can't reach him,' and she managed to pop the money into the box. There was a cart full of tennis players in very pretty red and white costume—more or less gentlemen and ladies—some bright rosy English girls amongst them, who were in a state of frantic loyalty. A procession of barbers, cooks, monkeys, flowers, all very well got up, defiled past the Hotel. The Queen, in spite of my feeble remonstrances, persisted in throwing out nearly all the flowers at once—then, like *Oliver Twist*—asked for more. One of the gentlemen brought them back from the road again, with many others, upon which Her Majesty turned to me with a twinkle in her eye and said: 'These may be full of infection¹—what would your Cousin say to this?' So away they were all tossed and fresh flowers from the generous Alice were again forthcoming. . . .

"Her Royal Highness is so much amused at Alice, whose gymnastics when she chances to meet Her Majesty are really very funny. Yesterday both she and Amy, in trying to escape from the Queen, who was in the garden, ran as hard as they could and finally threw themselves flat down on the ground, whilst the other day Alice walked backwards, through her little wood for some yards, until the Queen was able to pass her. Oh, dear, how funny! . . .

"I am reading in quiet moments Max Muller's *Physical Religion*, which I like immensely, most interesting. . . .

"We expect that Encyclopædia of learning, Lord Acton, up here on Thursday.

"... Alice's kindness, forethought and hospitality are just what one might have expected—but still one cannot help being astonished every now and then. Her cleverness and good management are wonderful."

Lady Battersea often told me that she was so much amused by the scene at the carnival that she could not repress her laughter. On Princess Louise trying to check her, the Queen turned

¹ There was an epidemic of smallpox in the town. Mrs. Flower writes of this episode in her journal: "It all looked rather small poxish to me, but it was amusing."

round and said: "I like to hear her laugh." This was not surprising, as her laughter was very infectious, and must have been a pleasant change from Court decorum.

That same night, in her journal, she describes an evening at the Queen's Hotel:

"... I want to have some conversation with the Queen, long for it, but we are taken downstairs to the large drawing room and the guests are shown in. Good, French, stiff, dowdy bourgeois, plainly, unbecomingly dressed. The Queen walks round and speaks to each one. I get introduced to a few. I am a little bored, but it is not much. At last they leave us. We have a little more talk with Her Majesty, this time about Hindustani and Hebrew, I am getting on quite nicely when the Princess reminds the Queen that it is eleven o'clock, and off she goes whilst we return home."

The journal is greatly taken up at this time by the distress of Her Majesty over her housemaid's illness, which, unfortunately, ended in her death.

"... The Queen's poor housemaid who had blood poisoning from pricking her finger, is now lying at the point of death.... Last night the Queen went to see the poor girl, who roused herself and recognised her. The Queen was much affected and quite won [Nurse] Watkins' heart...."

"Yesterday was the funeral of the poor housemaid, attended by the gentlemen of the household, many of the servants; the Queen superintended everything, and took great trouble about all details, in which she takes a morbid interest—according to Alice—a keen delight...."

In her journal she writes:

"APRIL 9th: ... How strange it all seemed. The Queen with her British subjects, all mourners in this Provençal country. A simple, reverent, English service in a land of unbelief...."

"Grasse. April 10th.

"... I am much impressed by the Queen's kindness and wonderful simplicity. She is easier, I think, to get on with than her daughters, and seems so grateful for any little attention that is shown her. . . ."

"Grasse. April 15th.

"... Alice has really been working like a slave, gives every order herself and reigns absolutely. There is nothing constitutional about this monarchy. No wonder the Queen has named her, 'the All Powerful.'"

After stopping en route at Paris to visit her cousins, Mrs. Flower returned home on April 22nd.

In her epitome of the year 1891 she writes :

"JANUARY 1st, 1892: . . . Dear Annie has spent nearly three weeks here. We are both working at our temperance and rescue work, with many blows and disappointments. . . . Have written nothing and played a great deal at Overstrand. . . . Nine happy, pleasant, quiet weeks at Overstrand. Have made a real friend of John Morley for which I thank God. . . . Liking Overstrand better than I thought I should. . . ."

"... There are new faces, new interests, almost new scenes, for Halton House is new, Ascott¹ is new, Tring² can be called new. New visitors come here—children of Cyril's brothers and sisters. I wish, oh, how I wish, that some of them were my very own. . . ."

In August 1892 she started with her cousin, Mrs. Leopold de Rothschild, and Lady Alice Stanley for Bayreuth.

On August 19th Mr. Leopold de Rothschild joined his wife and Mrs. Flower at Antwerp. In a letter to her mother Mrs. Flower describes how

"Leo runs into all the curiosity shops, buying presents for everyone who has any kind of connection with him—

¹ Home of Mr. Leopold de Rothschild.

² Home of Lord Rothschild.

Marie ; all the servants, Mrs James¹ the various Ascotts, *grandees*, *littledées*, it is really quite amusing ! Then Kiddy—Charles—Linte received from their generous master each 20 guldens to buy presents for their friends, and so it goes on *ad infinitum*.

“ If a man speaks to us in the street, shows us the way, or moves on one side, he has a *pourboire*, and, as for the Hotel people, they are buzzing round us when we stir out or come in, like flies.”

It was while she was at Antwerp that the news reached her that her husband had been offered a peerage. She wrote :

“ . . . I was not pleased. It seemed to me almost ridiculous. I thought Cyril should have had real office work, with all the dignity of responsibility. . . .”

On August 19th she writes :

“ . . . Heard the title is Lord Battersea. Oh !!! Wish Cyril could have had office work in the Commons. . . .”

And the next day :

“ . . . Letters from home. Mamma and Annie perfectly delighted with Cyril's appointment. I am getting accustomed to the idea, and, after all, it may be the very best thing for Cyril.”

In her epitome of the year she writes :

“ . . . Suffering from bane of politics. Cyril had meetings night after night and flew all over the country, spending nearly every Sunday at Overstrand or Aston Clinton. Our own election fell on July 15th, which was the culminating point of our work. . . . Cyril's majority was 1,019.

“ The elections were ostensibly fought for Home Rule all over the country, but no one really cared for the question and Mr Gladstone was returned to power with a majority of 41. Lamentable. I went out of England half reluctantly, wondering what office would be offered to Cyril. At Antwerp I heard the news—a peerage. . . . I tried to be pleased, but could ill conceal my disappointment.

¹ The lawyer's wife.

Things grew worse as time went on. The constituents were disgusted; the speeches were odious and the new candidate was only returned by a majority of 250. I went through troubled waters for some time. Revived and felt happier upon returning to Bucks and receiving a cordial invitation from Luton, where the town presented Cyril with addresses. The speeches were excellent. Cyril really spoke well and with feeling.

"We had two parties in London, both amusing, a political one for the '80' club, just after the election, and one for the Congress of Psychical Research, which was attended by all the foreign doctors and *savants*. The latter I thought perfectly delightful, although I believe it was largely composed of vivisectionists.

"We spent eight quiet weeks at Overstrand. Weather atrocious; people very friendly. Plenty of visitors. Gave the Overstrand mothers a tea. Saw a great deal of Lucy Cohen. . . ."

(It was from this time that I became very intimate with Lady Battersea, and used to visit her at Overstrand once or twice every year.)

Her summary continues:

"Went to the Bristol Conference with Annie and Fanny Morgan. A delightful time and new experiences. I spoke once on temperance and moved a vote of thanks. Was mentioned in the *Pall Mall*, but oh, how weak and ignorant I am!

"I have spoken at several meetings this year; have been asked in many other quarters. Cyril minds it less. I pray for a real baptism of the spirit. . . .

"Everything going on at Aston Clinton much as usual. . . . Technical education looking up. I do not feel that we are making much way with temperance work—at least, not here, alas.

"I cannot speak with the authority of the spirit. Prevention and rescue work going on steadily. Committee work well with much *entente cordiale*. Claude [Montefiore] delivered his Hibbert lectures. Read as much as possible, but in rather a desultory way. Mean to

keep a list of the books that I read this year. Am now engaged with Mrs Booth's Life ; most interesting and fascinating. I cannot help feeling the enormous difference between work done with God's help or only with man's strength.

"Have made no new friends this year, but hope I have lost no old ones. Still have my dear Adelaide¹ and her sisters, though see less of them than before.

"*Politics* : The division of party is doing its cruel, separating work in my case as in so many others.

"Dear Annie is plunged in work of all sorts. Absorbed by many interests, her life is blessed to herself and to others. My sweet, precious mother has been very unwell this year. Several months of pain and sleeplessness. She looks considerably older and so worn. Poor dear ! At times it makes my heart ache to see her. Yet she is always sweet and unselfish and good to us all.

"She is a sanctifying element in the house ; she makes the home ; she is the altar round which we assemble ; Christ-like, if I may use such a word in her case."

Again we see her craving for the spiritual life :

"... The society I live in, Cyril's political friends, are thoroughly agnostic and unbelieving, neither Jews nor Christians ; in Mrs Ward² alone I seem to be finding a kindred spirit who in reverent, free thought still acknowledges the power of the Unseen and the Great Ideal. . . ."

On February 1st, 1893, she writes :

"... Cyril came home at 6.30, saying, ' I have good news for you.'

"He flung himself into a chair and said, ' I have been offered the Governorship of New South Wales.'

"It struck me like a knife. . . ."

"FEBRUARY 4th : Annie and I went to Aston Clinton to tell Mamma. Meanwhile Cyril sent down the letters, a long one to Mamma, enclosing two—'yes' and 'no' to Lord Ripon. We let Mamma have her lunch and take

¹ Lady Brownlow.

² Mrs. Humphrey Ward.



LADY DE ROTHSCHILD, Circa 1890
From a photograph by Lord Battersea

a walk, then we told her. Poor dear! It was a bolt from the blue. Telegraphed to Overstrand; got a kind one back from Cyril."

The decision was "no."

In the following letter to Lord Battersea Mrs. Yorke describes the interview:

"Aston Clinton, Sunday.

"MY DEAR CYRIL,

"Everything was done as you desired, *without* emotion or excitement. Constance behaved *splendidly*. She told all the arguments *in favour* quite impartially.

"You know the result, and you have earned our eternal gratitude for saving our Mother from a blow and a sorrow, which I honestly do not believe she *could* have borne.

"Of course you know how bound up she is in Constance; but, as I told you the other day, you little know how deeply attached she is to *you*.

"God bless you for making this *enormous* sacrifice for her sake.

"Of course this subject opens out many others, and I can see how much she is thinking of your interests.

"God bless you again and again, and may He make up to you for *all* you have given up.

"Yours, with devoted affection and gratitude,

"ANNIE."

Lady Battersea's journal continues:

"FEBRUARY 6th: Letter sent to Lord Ripon. I added a few lines. Miserably weak; I do not feel fit for anything."

The decision about New South Wales was a turning point in Lord Battersea's career. He gave up the idea of public life, devoted himself to beautifying the Pleasaunce, and lost much of his interest in politics. He was a disappointed man, and to the end of her days Constance worried herself over her refusal to go to New South Wales. Lady de Rothschild had hoped for a political

career for her son-in-law, but an upheaval such as a governorship of one of the colonies had never crossed her mind. At the age of seventy-two she did not contemplate for a moment the idea of her daughter's leaving her to cross the seas for a distant and new land nor of accompanying her thither herself, however exalted the position might seem to her. It is curious that she never fully realized the *sacrifice* which Lord Battersea made ; still less did she show her appreciation of it, and a cloud was cast over their relationship for a time. In her journal she expresses her point of view :

" FEBRUARY 6th, 1893 : . . . Cyril was offered the Governorship of New South Wales, and evidently was much flattered and pleased and would greatly have liked to have accepted it. However he left the decision to dear Connie and happily for me, for Annie, and, I think, for herself, she had the courage to refuse the five years' crown. . . . I am more than sorry that Cyril should have been so evidently and sorely disappointed.

" TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14th : Cyril came down on Saturday . . . a very pleasant little party which I should have enjoyed, had I been in a happier state of mind, but Cyril's disappointment and anger about the New South Wales appointment made me feel most uncomfortable ! He was evidently disappointed in *me*, as I am in him !

" THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16th : Feel low and sad—whatever I am doing, my thoughts recur to the events of last week and to the terrible offer and Cyril's wish to accept it. If I had imagined for a moment that it could have conduced to dear Connie's happiness, I should not have put myself in the way of his doing so ! But both Annie and I think it would have made her unhappy."

To resume Lady Battersea's journal, on February 20th she writes :

" Started for Ireland. Drove up to the castle. Party consists of His Excellency,¹ two sisters, the sister-in-law,

¹ Lord Houghton : afterwards Marquess of Crewe.

and Miss Graham. We all curtsy to His Excellency and are very rigid on all points of etiquette. New South Wales never out of my mind, and I can see Cyril performing the various functions so beautifully and *enjoying* all of it. His Excellency came and sat next to me after dinner, but I felt faint and ill.

" FEBRUARY 21ST : . . . Dare I say that I most profoundly regret my decision ? And yet, had it been otherwise it might have killed my mother. Oh dear, oh dear ! "

Two letters to her mother describe her visit.

" The Castle,

" Dublin.

" February 21st. [1893]

" MY DEAREST MOTHER,

" . . . There are staying here : the two sisters of His Ex., the two sisters-in-law, the Duke of Montrose and Miss Graham, Lady Katherine Gaskell and her husband—she is very bright and clever—a Miss Bruce and her brother, cousins of Mrs Ogilvy and Sir Charles Euan Smith, who is agreeable.

" Then there are about eight officials—A.D.C.s, secretaries &c., who make up the little Court. I have no idea who they are, and only know a son of Lord Greville and a brother of Lord Airlie.

" The etiquette is very rigid. We all get up when His EX. comes in, curtsy when we greet him, drink the Queen's health standing after dinner and curtsy (as we leave the dining-room) to His Excellency. The band plays at dinner and in the evening.

" Lord Houghton looks to me a little nervous and not quite at his ease. He is stiff and determined to carry out the etiquette part of the régime. He talked to me all the evening, and I thought him very pleasant and rather pathetic when he said : ' one must look hopeful here, but I am far from feeling it—there is so much to depress one.'

" Then he grew quite warm and eloquent about ' dear

John¹ whom he considers the most charming companion—the most light in hand—in the world. . . .

“ I am going to see what I can of Dublin and the *entourage*; everyone here is quite willing to be a cicerone and I am sure that I shall be much amused.

“ They say that the Irish do not care a bit about the Home Rule Bill and that all the excitement and interest are on our side of the water. What a farce if this be true! . . .

“ Ever your most loving and devoted,
“ CON.”

“ The Castle,
“ Dublin.

“ February 22nd. (1893.)

“ DEAREST MAMMA,

“ . . . In the evening a theatrical performance—of a most mediocre kind—was given in St. Patrick’s Hall (the Castle). We all marched in—in grand procession—after dinner, the band playing God Save the Queen. The Hall is very fine and it was a blaze of colour—all the military men being in uniform and the ladies extremely well dressed. There were about four hundred people present, no ‘landed gentry,’ but the professional class largely represented. . . .

“ Mrs. Grimwood was amongst the guests; she is a very striking and handsome woman with a most beautiful figure, but rather a bold face. Lord Houghton is extremely dignified and plays the part very well, as if he had done nothing else all his life. I am getting quite accustomed to the curtsying and all the other points of etiquette.

“ Lord Wolseley was there, blazing with orders and medals, very charming and pleasant, but absolutely opposed to the present order of things.

“ Just home after a most interesting day, beginning with a visit to a Convent School for poor orphans, under Lady Aberdeen’s auspices, and finishing up with a visit on my own boots to Mahaffy, who cannot come to the

¹ John Morley.

Castle. None of the Unionists are seen here, except a Catholic priest, Father Healy, friends with both sides, a jolly, amusing creature. . . .

“ Your very loving devoted,

“ CON.”

On February 23rd she writes in her journal :

“ New South Wales appointment filled up.”

“ FEBRUARY 24th : Drove to Lady Wolseley in the afternoon. Spent some time there. Saw dear Lord Wolseley. Interesting visit. State ball amused me very much, but the cold was intense and bitter.”

“ FEBRUARY 26th : Drove to the hospital with my dear John Morley. Had a little talk with him. He was full of warm sympathy and approval ; in fact, he said had we gone it would have been decidedly wicked. How intensely happy that made me. I felt really better than I had done for days. Lunched with Wolseleys. I sat next to the General and found him most agreeable, although he is a bitter foe to the Government.”

“ FEBRUARY 28th : Last day of this terrible, never to be forgotten month.”

Lady de Rothschild tries to console herself with the thought :

“ FRIDAY, MARCH 3rd, 1893 : . . . Fortunately we have heard many adverse opinions to the advantages (which seem so great in Cyril's eyes) to the New South Wales Governorship. I do hope he may come to see its many shadows too one day, though he will doubtless never own that anything but sunshine would have awaited him at the Antipodes ! ”

At the end of the year Lord Battersea had a hunting accident, and I quote from Sir Edward Burne-Jones :

“ The Grange, West Kensington, W.

“ DEAR CYRIL,

“ I will—I will to-morrow evening, and I long to see you .

“ I didn't hear of your awful accident till you were

quite well—glad I didn't, for I should have been very troubled. Oh, Cyril, never mount a horse again—nor keep a dog—nor do any other perilous thing, for my friends are minishing and I can't do with things happening to them.

"I would have gone to you last week, but was low and unwell all the week. Now, being fat and lusty, I can come."

"Love to you both,

"Your affectionate,

"E.B.J."

"I have just read Swinburne's poem which the House of Commons can't control. It's a little bit like the prayer of the little girl who prayed: 'Kill him, O Lord, for Jesus Christ's sake,' about a gardener she hated.

"But how ungenerous and rude the *Daily News* is to the poet. The *Pall Mall* of course is, being rancorous and vindictive always, but I was ashamed to read that paragraph in the *Daily News*."

CHAPTER XII

1894-1907

*Travels — Morley — Balfour — Gladstone — Friends —
Queen Victoria's Funeral—Opening of Parliament—
Prison Work—Coronation—National Council of Women
Workers—Religion—Death of Lord Battersea*

FROM 1894 a great part of Lady Battersea's diary is taken up with descriptions of journeys. That year she travelled with Mrs. Yorke to Italy, where they were met by Lord Battersea in the *Garland*. All three then went on to Greece, of which she writes ecstatic letters to her mother. Quite recently I was told how she used to send Lady de Rothschild constant telegrams from Grecian mountain-tops, signing herself: "Penelope," "Ariadne," etc. When Lord Rosebery became premier, she wrote :

" MARCH 29TH: . . . Read the papers, which were full of Rosebery, nothing but Rosebery. A strange, unpalatable, thoroughly Greek hotel. . . . We had taken our cook with us and had brought beds and bedding. . . ."

Perhaps it is worth while to give one extract from her journal, when, on their return from Greece, she and her husband visited the little capital of Montenegro :

" APRIL 26TH: Settled to go to Cetinje. Never saw

anything less like a capital ; not more amusing than an English village. Lunched with the Kennedys. Just going out for a stroll when the Minister for Foreign Affairs was announced. He is a most cultivated and handsome man in national dress, speaking French very beautifully. We then received a message from the Prince, giving us an audience. Off we walked, Cyril having donned a black coat, Mr Kennedy being in regulation garments. Received by two magnificent Montenegrins, who bowed us into the Chamber. The Prince stood at the door in full Montenegrin costume, which is the most beautiful dress one can see. He has a fine, martial figure, and a very intelligent face. He received us most kindly, motioned us all to be seated ; talked pleasantly in French. The Princess was at her devotions, which are very strict this week. The Prince was very full of gratitude and admiration for Mr G[ladstone]. He delights in seeing English people. Talked in his kindly way, and was in raptures about Mr G. He is a despot of the best sort, adored by his people, a true Montenegrin, devoted to his strange, wild, mountainous principality."

On May 5th they arrived at Venice, where she was taken ill with chickenpox. The tedium of convalescence seems to have been relieved by visits from Mr. Henry James, and Dr. Munthe, the Swedish author of *The Story of San Michele*.

In August she visited Miss Cobbe at Dolgelly. She writes :

" AUGUST 8TH, 1894 : I am very happy in this pretty, mountainous place. The two old ladies¹ spoil and pet me with all their might and main. Miss Cobbe, my own special one, walks and drives with me, and we talk by the hour. It is such a wholesome life, with which I am in harmony. . . ."

There is, however, still something that repels her in Miss Cobbe's Theism. She continues :

" . . . Would this very spiritual Theism be a real support

¹ Miss Cobbe and her friend, Miss Lloyd.

and help in time of trouble and distress? Does it appeal to me like true church Christianity? Could I live without service or communion, expressed by public worship, with God? Should I not want the *camaraderie* of my fellow creatures? Could I bear to stand quite alone? Should I not at last do without all spiritual help? These difficulties seem to bar the path of Theism, and yet, there is something grand in having no absurdities to get rid of."

"AUGUST 15TH: Travelled down to Overstrand with Cyril and Gerald Balfour."

Her next entry is not until December 12th, when she writes, on hearing of the death of Baroness Charles de Rothschild:

"... I broke the news to Mamma. It was a sad and terrible day.

"Dear Aunt Louisa! Bright, charming, delightful, fascinating memory of youth, bound up with our young years, with trips, visits to Germany, lively parties, the adored of her brothers, the pet of so many members of London society, for a time, the favourite of all her family. She was like a second mother to us, she knew all about our little love affairs, she was always anxious for us to marry, and marry as we liked; she was *essentially* human and *very delightful*. To my own beloved Mother she is a terrible loss, recalling her childhood and youth, as no one else could do. O, what a mercy that they should have met last August. I wish with all my heart that I could have seen her again. Dear, dear Aunt. Of the world, and yet not too worldly; full of bright vivacity of *charm*, without being beautiful; talented, gifted, brilliant, and yet womanly. Not one of her daughters can quite be compared to her.

"It is a real grief to us."

The following spring she again went on a yacht with her sister, meeting Lord Battersea at Seville. She writes with typical enthusiasm of Tangier:

"... Picturesque everywhere. Saw the court house and prison. Latter ghastly. Market—drove of camels most amusing. Numbers of Jews, synagogues, mosques,

minarets, all close together. The Jewish women unveiled with large, eager eyes and very black hair ; the Moorish women, covered up in their white garments, like bundles walking about. The men (Moors) good-looking. Enjoyed ourselves *immensely*. Dreadfully sorry to leave. . . ."

Lord Battersea's chief purchase on this trip appears to have been a parrot.

On August 14th she started for Keswick, where her brother-in-law had taken a house. There she saw a good deal of Canon Rawnsley, the great authority on Wordsworth, whom she describes as

"a delightful man ! He is full of ardour and enthusiasm, a creature of fads. . . ."

On August 20th, 1895, she writes :

"Never to be forgotten day. Grey and rainy. Almost felt as if our expedition would have to be given up. Not so Arthur [her brother-in-law]. He was in tearing spirits and declared that it was all right, so we started on our char-a-bancs, picking up Mrs Lowther on the way and driving forty miles. I was never without Mr Rawnsley all day, and oh, what did I not drink in !"

After visiting Wordsworth's homes and grave at Grasmere, they

"went on to Rydal Mount, to Foxhow. There we were met and I was, oh, so kindly received by Miss Arnold. Wish that I could have spent hours, instead of minutes—I had so much to see and to learn and to store up.

"It was dark when we drove home, but it was truly an enchanting and delightful drive, full of memories. I made great friends with that unconventional Canon."

She went on to Scotland, where she was the guest of Lord Tweedmouth. She writes :

"AUGUST 24TH, 1895: Guisachan. Morleys to dinner. I had much talk with J.M.—delightful. Sir Edward Grey is a Wordsworthian.

" AUGUST 25TH: . . . An enormous party to luncheon. Walked out in the afternoon with J.M. Brought him back to tea. A delightful talk. What a man! It is like running on india-rubber tyres to talk with him.

" The Greys looked through my book of extracts. Had considerable talk with Lady Grey. She is very clever and thorough, but a little stand-offish."

" AUGUST 27TH: . . . J.M. said the two greatest masters of English style were Newman and Froude."

" AUGUST 30TH: Walked with John Morley. What a big, great mind he has, what an instinct for, what a leaning to, spiritual things. He spoke much of the life of a country clergyman, and said how beautiful it might be. Then he talked of Stanley, church, and also of the Jews; of their power as a race, of their spiritual opinions. He told me how much interested he was in men and women, how he liked humanity.

" He spoke much of the necessity of work, of some quiet hours, of a literary task to engross one fully. We both deplored the whirl and dissipation of the present day. Illumination of the mind to be with him.

" SEPTEMBER 1ST: . . . John Morley lunched with us. A little quiet talk with him. Mentioned George Trevelyan's name. Said that the best three biographies of this century were Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, Stanley's of Arnold, Trevelyan's of Macaulay. Added that neither Macaulay nor Trevelyan had excited any spiritual emotions; to them a dead wall. . . .

" We also talked of liberalism, which seems to have shifted its ground, as it were, gone over to the Tories. They have taken our humanitarian questions and left us to confront Socialism and Trades Unions. He gave me a beautiful motto:—'*Les grandes pensées viennent du cœur.*'

" Enjoyed this Highland experience. Left with real sorrow."

" SEPTEMBER 5th: Went . . . to Whittinghame. Received by Lady Frances [Balfour]. . . .

" SEPTEMBER 6th: . . . Arthur B. arrived for dinner. I felt a little shy at first, not having seen him for so long, but the feeling soon went off and the evening was illumined.

"SEPTEMBER 7th: Woke with the pleasant sensation that I was staying under the same roof with the most delightful of men. Gave quite a new zest to life. . . .

"Charming, delicious evening. Talked much of John Morley and of Edward Grey. Amused ourselves by counting up the literary men in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Morley in the one; stopped by Bishops in the other, not knowing how many of them could be counted as literary. Quite sorry when bed-time came. What a personality he is. Lovable, distinguished, broad, refined—oh dear, what a gulf between him and most men.

"SEPTEMBER 8th: Last day of my delicious jaunt."¹

From the following it can be seen that Mr. Balfour was already interested in the Jews.

"SEPTEMBER 8th: . . . Talked about J. Morley's and Chamberlain's religious views, also about Claude [Montefiore] and the Jews. Luncheon again delightful. Then went into A.B.'s room. Looked at his books, full of interest; talked again about Claude, whom he wishes to know.

"After dinner, talked a great deal about the Jews, alien immigration, synagogues, chorus, churches. Prayers in the evening. Chapter from Isaiah, beautifully and reverently read. It did my heart and soul good. Then prayers from the English Liturgy. A nice talk before going to bed. Alas, all over."

At the end of the year comes her last visit to Hawarden, and here again another Prime Minister listens to her opinion, not so much of the Jews, but of their Bible:

"DECEMBER 7th, 1895: . . . Drove along a muddy, heavy road to Hawarden. Arrived at tea time. Found the family assembled. Mr Gladstone looks extremely old; he is fatter and whiter, changed. . . . We drank our tea, then Mr G. read out some poetry that he said was

¹ She says of this visit: "Never-to-be-forgotten time. Poor A. B. suffering from toothache, so he could not be quite at his best, but even in that state better than most men."

sad and suicidal, but that had just been sent to him. . . . He is reading voraciously and working hard.

"DECEMBER 8th: A sunny morning—cold without and somewhat icy within. Glad to find myself at Hawarden once more. The old people do not come down to breakfast. . . . We all went to eleven o'clock church in the village. I walked with Mary [Gladstone's daughter, Mrs. Drew]. Had some interesting talk on the way; the church dark, but fine and attractive; a good congregation. Sat in the same pew with Mr and Mrs G. He is quite a study in church, for he never takes his eyes off Bible or Prayer Book, reading everything most conscientiously. When it comes to the Sermon, he leaves the pew and has a high seat arranged close to the pulpit, that is to say, he sits on a footstool placed on the seat of an ordinary pew, and then fixes his eyes upon the preacher's face. The Sermon was upon the grain of mustard seed, sensible and well delivered.

"After church, called at the Rectory. Cold intense. Then at the library and Hostel of St. Deiniol. There are thirty thousand books in the former in two large rooms—one for theological, and the other for secular works. The Hostel is capable of receiving twelve students. There were two or three there already and seven were expected. Mr G. has planned everything and arranged most of the books himself.

"... Sat next to Mr G. at luncheon. Found him much brighter and more ready to talk. He was as usual most kind to me. . . . At dinner I sat again next to Mr G., but, alas! always on the wrong side, so that I do not get his good ear. I had therefore to shout and the whole table listened, which made it awkward and difficult.

"We talked about John Morley and the three biographies that he quotes as being the best in this Century. Then we talked about J.M.'s learning Italian and Manzoni's 'Ode to Napoleon.' Mr G. is much interested in animals and in their *moral* qualities. He praised the study of Natural History and of Science in contrast to that of modern languages, which seemed to me foolish. Later in the evening I sat alone with him in his Temple of Peace, and I said:—

“ ‘ Mr Gladstone, I think you attribute too great a belief in a future life to the old Hebrews. I do not see it so clearly defined as you do in the Psalms.’ ”

“ Mr Gladstone : ‘ Pardon me—the question is a very big one. Shall I tell you what I think of it ? ’ ”

“ Of course I murmured my assent.

“ Mr Gladstone : ‘ At first amongst the old nations, there was merely an idea of the survival of something, connected with the body ; not actually the body, but the idea of eternity was non-existent ; it was too difficult to grasp—it was only survival.

“ ‘ This was probably the case amongst the Hebrews—but still, they did believe in the future existence of the soul—vide Enoch who walked with God, Elijah, who rose to Heaven in a chariot of fire, David, who mentions going to his child—three distinct proofs.

“ ‘ The old Hebrews did not think with any rapture of a future life. It did not appeal to them as it did to the Christians, but we may take it for granted that the idea existed. The resurrection of the body is quite Christian.

“ ‘ It is far better not to try and define what eternity means, or we shall be drawn into all the difficulties of eternal punishment.’ (This I thought very sensible.)

“ ‘ We must be content to leave much to futurity. But the Hebrews did believe in a future state and “ Sheol ” was not merely the grave.’ ”

“ I have my doubts as to the latter, but did not say so.

“ We also talked of Job, and he asked me when I thought it was written. I replied, ‘ Late, on account of the nature of the Hebrew—post-Exilic.’ Then we talked of the Apocrypha. I told him that several books had been written in Hebrew, others in Greek, that it had been included in, and then excluded from, Luther’s Bible, but I believed it was never read in the Lutheran Church. I then brought him my Psalter and asked him to write a verse in it, which he did :

“ ‘ Keep me as the apple of an eye,
Hide me under the shadow of Thy wings.’ ”

‘ Written at the request of Lady Battersea by W. E. Gladstone, Dec. 8, 1895.’

"I thanked him and told him how much I cared for the Psalter and for the extracts that he had arranged for different occasions. He seemed pleased and said it was the most beautiful book that existed. Then I bade him good-bye and saw him no more.

"I shall think of him, immersed in his work, studying from eight to nine hours a day, reverent, devout, full of prejudice, but kindly."

In the previous summer Lady de Rothschild in her journal describes how, on July 1st, 1894 :

"I went with Constance to pay Gladstone a visit at Dollis Hill. It was a strange, fine, somewhat sad picture to see the old, venerable statesman on a seat, shadowed by trees on that picturesque lawn, looking well and cheerful, with the hope of soon being able to see to read again, and in the mean time, talking with his extraordinary enthusiasm and vigour of Homer's genius, of Japanese talents, of the hundred thousand uses which can be made of paper. Was there ever such a versatile mind?"

In the autumn Mrs. Yorke also paid a visit to the aged statesman, when she writes to Lady Battersea :

"Hawarden Castle. The 4th October, 1895.

"... I have enjoyed my Temperance Tour very much indeed. At Sheffield I stayed with the Wilsons, clever, pleasant people. . . .

"I had to prepare an address for the large evening Meeting, in the place of Miss Weston, who had failed us! I really 'brayed'!! quite respectably. All our ladies sat on the platform. . . . I had only strange faces in front of me, which *I think* is a great help. . . .

"I arrived in time at *Chester* to attend an excellent Meeting with some dear people on Bands of Hope—sensible and very suggestive—and then drove here to this classic domain, where I received a most kind welcome. I found your beloved John Morley, who sends you a great many messages, talks of you, your *conversation* and your letters with affection and *admiration*. . . .

"I had a delightful dinner, listening to literary discussions between the G.O.M. and J. Morley. The G.O.M. is wonderfully well—he is rather fatter in the face—but *very* white. Excepting that he is a little deafer, I do not see *much* change. His old face lights up with vehemence and fire when he talks of the vile Turks, and his mouth puckers up with good-natured little smiles at some little joke or nonsense, to which he condescends occasionally.

"He is *not* very strong about the Veto Bill (which, but this is *private*, I think he considers should have been a private and not a Government Bill). He is very *miserable* about the three servants who have succumbed from drink, and both he and Mrs Gladstone are anxious for something to be done in the *village*, which is natural and human on their parts.

"All the delegates came from Chester yesterday afternoon and wandered about the grounds, hoping for a glimpse of the G.O.M., but he had a little internal disturbance and would not risk going out in the *awful* weather. . . .

"Mrs G is a *wonder*. She had driven all the way to Chester in an open carriage to open a Bazaar, looked in at the Town Hall at one of the Temperance Meetings, and finished up with her own Meeting in the evening. She looked *rather* shrunk and older, but is otherwise much the same, very dear and kind and thoughtful.

"I am very sorry to leave so soon, but am off this morning to Chester and London in the afternoon.

"Addio. Love to Cyril. Many affectionate inquiries after both him and you from the G.O.M.—G.O.W. and family."

In a letter to me [L.C.] Mrs. Yorke describes how on this visit she

"found him arguing very *hotly* with Lord Morley on the desirability, or the reverse, of placing a statue to Oliver Cromwell near the Abbey. Mr. G. *disapproved*. At last, turning his piercing eyes upon me, he said, 'Well, Mrs Yorke, what do you say? Should he have a statue placed there, or should he not, or have you never thought

about it?' I tremblingly confessed I had never thought about it, but (thinking of the Dictator's Liberal treatment of the Jews) I mumbled something about his religious *tolerance*. Mr G. acquiesced—with a *shrug* of his shoulders. I do not think *that* appealed to him . . ."

In 1896, two years before Mr. Gladstone's death, the Hon. Spencer Lyttelton writes of him as being immersed in the life of Cardinal Manning, by Purcell, and describing it as the most interesting religious biography that he knew.

In her summary of the year 1896 Lady Battersea mentions for the first time eight visits to the convict prison at Aylesbury.

It was in 1894 that Mr. Asquith, then Home Secretary, asked Lady Battersea if she would visit regularly the inmates of the one female convict prison in England, at Aylesbury. Her two colleagues were Adeline, Duchess of Bedford, and Sir Algernon West.

It seems almost prophetic that as a girl of eighteen she wrote in her journal:

"NOVEMBER 4th, 1861: Went in the afternoon to the gaol, which has always a strong interest for me. The gaolers all seemed to be wonderfully good, humane men. It is a most interesting place. The order is striking . . ."

Her cheerful, sympathetic presence must indeed have been a godsend in that dreary place. She obtained one or two amenities for the prisoners,¹ and she rejoiced at being allowed to get up yearly concerts or entertainments for them. Lady Gosford, writing years after, says:

"... You are delightful to talk to—you have so many interests, and are so clever about them all. If you never come to see me, I shall have to join the Convict Prison

¹ e.g., backs to their seats, tooth-brushes (when desired) and more interesting books.

and have a cell next to Mrs Maybrick! Goodbye, you nice person."

Lady Battersea found the work intensely interesting, and used to hear from some of the prisoners after their release. I quote from a letter from Mrs Maybrick, on her retirement to a convent :

"21st February, 1904.

"I much regret that I am unable to thank you in person for your kind thought. I shall make daily use of this lovely 'Hymn-Book,' with a grateful remembrance of the friendly interest you have always expressed on my behalf. It seems almost impossible to realise that I have closed the last page of my sad, shadowed life—amongst which the visits of her Grace, the Duchess of Bedford and yourself will always remain as a very bright contrast. . . ."

To return to the journals, on August 29th, 1897, Lady Battersea writes :

"... Claude came to luncheon; gentle, interesting, delightful. He stayed some time, talking about Psalms and his work. . . . He returned for dinner. . . . We had more pleasant talk. He asked me whether I would group the Psalms for him, according to my own idea. Then he quoted passages from the Old Testament which might possibly bear on the Immortality of the soul. Such talk is fascinating to me, and I get so little of it. I wish I could see more of him. . . ."

"AUGUST 31st: Spent the whole morning . . . at work over the Psalms. Very interesting. . . ."

"SEPTEMBER 2nd: . . . G. Meredith arrived, brilliant as ever. He began to talk at once in his own strange fashion and was immensely amusing. . . ."

"Talked of Mr Arnold, whom he called 'a dandy Isaiah'; of Miss Cobbe, saying she had 'a tone of the trousers' about her writings.

"He extolled Wordsworth's Sonnets and placed them above Milton's, quoting the XI, also Tennyson's 'Ænone', for beauty of diction. He really is startling."

After his visit was over, Meredith wrote the following appreciative letter :

“ Box Hill, Dorking.

“ September 14th, 1897.

“ MY DEAR LADY BATTERSEA,

“ In a perfectly quiet atmosphere, looking on my turf-banks grey with euphrasia, I have an eye in the back of my head for the Pleasaunce and the North Sea Nereids waving white arms of welcome or farewell to the lusty morning plunger, whom they fortify for his golf-stick’s matchless prowess. In truth, I am with you at heart, and shall be. I might speak flatteries, but that I am unused in the art, and you must be hearing too many. I beg you to give nothing less than my love to him who is the brother of his guest. As much of it as you may deign to receive is offered to you, despite the cruelty which robs me of the dream that there is better in the world some vast distance off—and you know these poets are happier in their dreams than the blessed reality can make them. Believe me, nevertheless, that I am not ungrateful, and that I am ever

“ Your devoted,

“ GEORGE MEREDITH.”

During the previous year, he had accepted Lord Battersea’s invitation to Overstrand in the following amusing note :

“ Box Hill, Dorking.

“ October 25th, 1896.

“ DEAR LORD BATTERSEA,

“ My daughter has come to me, lyrical in the praise of Lady Battersea’s graciousness and your cordial kindness to the guest ; by which I am tempted to think that you may for two or three days bear with the presence of one who is a sort of cripple and shuffles along like the latest recruit of the Invalides.¹ Therefore I send my grateful

¹ Mr. Meredith had become partially paralysed.

acceptance and will come on any day that is agreeable to you after Thursday of next week.

“Your most faithful,
“GEORGE MEREDITH.”

Lord Morley, regretting that he is unable to come, had written of George Meredith to Lady Battersea :

“57 Elm Park Gardens, South Kensington.

“Oct. 16, 96.

“Oh, my dear Lady, do you know that a workman cannot get on without his tools, and that a poor student is best in his library. I have never been able to work outside of my own little book-room, and I never shall, and work I feel that I *must*, after all these years wasted on politics.

“I may go abroad for two or three weeks. Will Cyril let me take you too? *Honi soit qui mal y pense!*

“What a joyful thing for you to have had Meredith with you. There is a man of radiant genius, if you like. I am glad that he spoke kindly of poor me. I owe many a glorious hour to him, so many years ago. Did you ever read his Sonnet to J.M.?

“Please wait until the spring comes, and then to Aston Clinton will I come with it.

“Always yours sincerely,
“J. MORLEY.”

On October 6th, 1897, Lady de Rothschild writes :

“It seemed strange and rather sad to spend the Fast quite alone and not fasting. However I could not attempt the latter and I did not pass the day badly—in fact, perhaps thinking less of food than I have often done and more of spiritual matters, if one may use such a term. . . .”

In the April of 1898 Lady Battersea paid another visit to Grasse, this time with her sister. Extracts from Lady Battersea’s journal and from their letters to their mother give an account of this visit :

"APRIL 1st: . . . Off to Grasse. Dear Alice met us kindly and lovingly, very happy here again, wish I were going to stay a month. . . ."

"APRIL 3rd. Palm Sunday: . . . We went into the garden until 11.30. Exquisitely kept, but a little too formal and precise for my taste. No *abandon* of nature. The only dog who may walk on the paths is Goalie. Poor Robin¹ not at all in favour.

"Drove in small chairs drawn by little black ponies and a white donkey to the new tea house on the mountain. Very beautiful and wonderfully engineered; a real triumph of work, but still, for my taste, too formal."

"APRIL 7th: First day of Passover. Wish I could have kept it as it ought to have been kept. The spiritual and religious note again wanting here."

Lady Battersea writes to her mother:

"Grasse. April 5th.

" . . . We seem to have jumped into summer, for the green blinds are closed and the sun sends us into the shade and is bringing out countless roses, geraniums, verbenas, making the garden a *feast* of scent.

"One misses the birds that would be twittering all day in England and adding so much to the charm of the landscape. It is a little too artificial here which mars the real enjoyment of what this is supposed to be—country life.

"I was warned by Alice never to put my foot upon the *grass* anywhere in her domain. Fancy, in a fit of abstraction, I did so, right under Alice's eyes, which sent her into a violent passion. I really felt dreadfully penitent, particularly as it was a foolish act of mine and I never intended to walk upon the grass and merely put my foot upon it in a moment of abstraction, but now since I know I may not do it, I should like to run about in the fresh green sward, just as I felt inclined to scream when I was with Her Majesty, because everybody talked under their breath.

"I long for a little disorder. There is not one leaf or weed to be met with on the paths, and the worms are

¹ Mrs. Yorke's Scotch terrier.

carefully picked up and taken away when they appear after rain.

"Dogs are not allowed in the sacred precincts with the exception of one infinitesimally small 'Skilbecken', and poor Robin might be an improper character, so completely is he ignored.

"Annie and I drove in one of Alice's quaint little pony chaises yesterday, drawn by two small black ponies, led by two handsome, picturesque stablemen. We went into the town and produced the most extraordinary sensation, for Alice generally keeps to her own road. Tourists stared with surprise, the laundresses left the well and running stream to look and wonder, shopmen came to their doors and boys and girls ran wonderingly after us. It really was very droll! Two enterprising English people, whilst we were in a shop, made a closer inspection of our equipage. We felt like idols being drawn through the town and, had it not been so hot and the roads so steep, we should speedily have taken to our feet. At last we left the street and turned back to the mountain, where we were met by Alice in another small conveyance, drawn by a white Egyptian donkey.

"We inspected her imposing tea house on the summit of her property. It has two dressing rooms, a pink one for ladies, a green one for gentlemen, servants' kitchen half underground, but *no dogs*. . . ."

Mrs. Yorke writes on the following day :

"Villa Victoria, Grasse, Alpes-Maritimes.

"April the 6th.

"... Yesterday we drove down at an early hour to meet Cyril.

"We paid a visit to Lady Brougham in her wonderful villa, where the rose trees are almost *forest* trees in dimensions, and where the view over the blue sea and the Estrelles is marvellous. We found her surrounded by lively English people and smart Americans. . . .

"Cyril is in a state of unbounded ecstasy over the extraordinary beauty of this place and the genius of its owner. I think Alice must be delighted with his admira-

tion, which is well-deserved. Her artistic taste, combined with her mastery of detail and real knowledge of flowers and shrubs, has had a wonderful result, and under this brilliant sky Cyril is seeing it to great advantage.

"Robin (who is still *incognito*) is very well. I think the air of the Riviera suits him decidedly. . . ."

Lord Battersea was as usual tempted to buy, and

"ordered an immense quantity of scents. . . ."

After going on to Rome they returned *via* Paris, where Lady Battersea spent nine days with her cousins.

Shortly after her return to England, we read in her journal :

"MAY 19th, 1898 : Ascension Day.

"Death of Gladstone. What significant words. What did they not contain. Over the whole world flew the message,

'Gladstone dead.'

"... For the next ten days, the papers teemed with accounts of his life ; his political career, his theology, his literary performances, his character, his sayings, his illness, his death. Gladstone literally filled the whole of one's reading day—one could talk and think and write of nothing but that one, ever absorbing subject.

"He seemed to grow in proportion as he faded from our gaze ; and then the funeral, on Saturday, May 28th, at Westminster Abbey. Wonderful, striking in every detail ; simple, impressive, dignified, grand ; real emotion displayed. It struck a very high note. The Princess of Wales with her supreme loveliness and stateliness paid the homage that Royalty should pay to genius and character. The music was beautiful, the hymn-singing grand, every one joined as if every one felt it. Pathos was present in the venerable, loving figure of Mrs Gladstone. Cyril walked with the Lords. . . .

"MAY 20th : I heard the speeches in the 'Lords' ; an

extraordinary performance, when friends and opponents were all doing honour to one man.

"Lord Salisbury in perfect taste, Lord Rosebery fine and academic, not a discordant or jarring note."

She writes of her recollections of Gladstone, and among them tells how

"Mr and Mrs Gladstone came twice to Aston Clinton, the first time in April, '88, the second time in April, '90. We had much delightful talk. On the second occasion he remained on with us, alone, when everyone else had left including his wife, who was called to Hawarden by the illness of Mrs Drew's [her daughter] little girl, and he was left in our care. He was then writing *The Impregnable Rock* and lay in his bed, surrounded by Bibles, Prayer Books and theological works. It was then that he asked me whether Verse 3 in Chapter XXIII Exodus had been properly translated: 'Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause.'

"I answered, 'Yes,' as 'neither', the negative, occurs in the Hebrew original. It is an evidence of the supreme justice of the laws of Moses, but I do not think that Mr G. quite liked this explanation."

Her next entry is not until the end of the year, when once again she tells of a death:

"DECEMBER 21st, 1898: . . . *Dear* Evelina and her baby were taken on December 4th 1865, and now Ferdinand, one of the best, dearest and most beloved of my cousins, has followed his wife. It is a *real grief*. . . ."

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"... How difficult, how impossible to believe that it was all at an end. Such a useful life. We had cared for him, and I did always feel that he cared for us! . . .

"DECEMBER 22nd: Ferdie's funeral. . . .

"Synagogue *crowded*. . . . Down below an extraordinary medley. The curtains and trappings all white, white flowers in front of the Ark. Service fine and impressive, Mr. Spero's singing quite beautiful, a wailing

chaunt. Mr Singer's¹ the most finished reading. Doctor Adler² preached well—a difficult task.

“The Prince, Natty and Albert³ sat in the Wardens' places. I thought the whole ceremony affecting. . . .

“DECEMBER 23rd: Returned to Aston Clinton. Alas! Poor Ferdie, or rather, should I say, our own poor lives. ‘Our ranks are thinning,’ said Adelaide Brownlow, ‘painfully’. I am losing my contemporaries!”

Waddesdon, with all its treasures, was left by Mr. Ferdinand de Rothschild to his sister, Miss Alice de Rothschild (of Grasse).

In her journal Lady Battersea continues:

“I have spoken a great number of times and know that I have been somewhat of a success. . . .”

This can be readily believed in view of her description, in a letter to her mother, of the Norwich Conference, where she read a paper on “The Amenities of Life.” She writes:

“Overstrand, Cromer. October 29th.

“... I never shall forget how my Norfolk friends behaved to me—they made everything easy and simply flocked in for my paper. There was no sitting or standing room, about 800 people present, many from Cromer and the surroundings. I almost knew the paper by heart, so that I could look at the people and make my points. I read very slowly and my audience applauded and laughed and cheered and helped me all the way through.

“I had quite a storm of applause at the end, and really was much too much praised for it. But it came as a light and amusing interlude to the most serious and tremendous subjects, so it was a relief and liked as such.

¹ Senior Minister at the North Petersburgh Place Synagogue.

² The Chief Rabbi.

³ The Prince of Wales (H.M. King Edward VII), Lord Rothschild and Mr. Albert Solomon de Rothschild of Vienna, brother of Ferdinand de Rothschild.

" I had a delightful afternoon, presiding for the young ladies, and a magnificent Temperance Meeting in St. Andrew's Hall, with 1,500 *people*, men and women, who sang their hymns magnificently to the organ accompaniment ; I never thought I could have made myself heard, but I did, only it was a great strain. The Mayoress gave a great party in the same Hall on Thursday, which was very amusing and where all the workers met and talked. I was invited to attend about a hundred meetings and to repeat ' The Amenities ' here, there and everywhere, which, needless to say, I declined.

" Yesterday I felt so much amused, for the young ladies of the town, Bishop's daughters and Dean's daughters, quite appropriated me and want me to give them addresses. So, dearest Mother, I felt it high time to leave Norwich and return to what one of the ladies calls ' the *Discipline* of marriage.'

" I think your paragraph about the sunset, G. Russell's suggestions and a very good hint of Mary Curzon's helped to make the success of the paper. Left to myself it would not have been nearly as bright. . . ."

In her review of the year she goes on :

" My paper on the Amenities of Life was a real success. Have been asked to write on the ' Ethics of Amusement ' for the International Congress.

" Also to lecture to the Working Men and Women in March at one of their colleges. Have visited the prison twelve times. Much interested.

" . . . Reading fairly much, but not conscientiously enough. As always, take the greatest interest and derive the greatest pleasure from intellectual pursuits.

" I do not seem to care for people as much as formerly, and rather like making new acquaintances in different grooves and lines of life to those in which I am accustomed to live. . . .

" And what of Overstrand? It is quaint, pretty, gay, and there are throngs of people all the summer. We are *never alone*. A succession of visitors keep me employed, but they are out of doors so much that fortunately I have some time to myself every day. . . ."

On November 15th she went to Birmingham, where she

"... went to a very smart meeting of educated people. Never did anything so difficult as making an address to such an audience, but it was quite a success. Much complimented. . . ."

The following day she visited the chocolate works at Bournville.

"... Mrs Cadbury met us at the Office. . . . We went through miles of work rooms and saw every stage of cocoa and chocolate making. It was too hurried a visit to enable our understanding very much about the process, but it was interesting as a whole. I liked the looks of the employees. . . ."

"Everything [in Bourneville Village] had been well considered. . . ."

Early the next year comes a description of a family service, probably the Barmitzvah (confirmation) of one of the small boys :

"JANUARY 7th, 1899. A very happy, sweet day ; grey ugly, muddy London, and yet a little bit of Heaven. I sat at synagogue in my old seat ; it all seemed so familiar. The whole family assembled in this House of Prayer. Natty walked in with his two sons : Leo, followed by three boys and his nephew. The little ones looked such dears in their Eton jackets, high hats and taliths. I could have cried. I felt happy and yet wretched. Chief Rabbi present and a good congregation. In our seat, Emmy, Evelina, Marie, Louise. Clara Harris behind. Mr Spero sang the service quite beautifully, his voice touching in the extreme. It has that sad, oriental wail, combined with much sweetness."

In April Lady Battersea and I went to Florence together. I find in her journal :

"... Lucy Cohen with her brother Harry at the station. Good-bye to Cyril—hate good-byes. . . ."

"APRIL 12th, 1899: . . . After luncheon drove up to Bellasguardo. Found Lady Paget, draped in black, picturesque and strange; Gay Windsor and her children, countless animals, the whole place out of the way, peculiar. . . ."

Lady Battersea came back after this luncheon, describing the beauty of her hostess and her daughter, and saying Lady Paget had told her that if she would only live on nuts and oranges she had no idea how etherealized her thoughts would become.

Her journal continues:

"APRIL 14th: . . . Went out after luncheon with Mr Hare; drove to a little Chapel Apollonia and saw pictures by Castagna."

"APRIL 17th: . . . In the afternoon the Bargello with Berenson. . . ."

"APRIL 24th: . . . So sorry to leave dear Florence. . . . Exciting arrival at *Rome*. My sixth visit. A glorious, fresh, moonlight night."

At the end of the year she writes:

"DECEMBER 25th. Christmas day. . . . Saw a great deal of my dear Miss Lawrence. She came to see me dressed for the Drawing Room, came to Grosvenor Place to meet American Ladies, came to hear me read 'Ethics of Amusement', came to Gunnersbury garden party, came and spent a week at Aston Clinton."

Her first mention of Miss Lawrence is on June 5th, 1891, when she writes:

"Made Miss Lawrence's acquaintance. Feel as if it were an era in my life."

In her epitome of that year she describes her:

" . . . A Jewess, an invalid, but a very remarkable woman. She is strangely taken with me. I have only seen her three times, but we have corresponded at length."

In the years that follow there are constant allusions to her, till, in her summary of 1899, she continues :

“ Then followed her tragic death. Alas ! dear friend, what have I not lost in you. She cared for me and was interested, and that deeply, in everything I read, wrote and spoke. I miss her terribly—her kindly interest, her advice, her cleverness in repartee, her caustic sayings, and her great, loving heart. . . . I knew her for *eight years* ; leapt into friendship, and she gave me her whole heart and much devotion. She has helped me in my life ; did I help her in hers—and where is she now ? ”

In 1905 she writes :

“ I have received from that poor, forlorn Miss Davis all my old letters to Miss Lawrence, every shred that I ever wrote. I read them all, every one ; she had only destroyed *one* ; and then I burnt a good many but I kept others, for they may interest me later on, and they form a strange story of my inner life. I have never had a friend quite like Sara Lawrence, who seemed almost to take possession of my every thought and action, who was always there. With her brilliant intellect, her penetration and divination, she saw through my inner soul and forced things from me such as I could not have believed possible.”

Lady Battersea, in return, had kept a good many of Miss Lawrence's letters, and the correspondence was, indeed, very revealing. The following quotation from one of Lady Battersea's letters to this friend explains her attitude towards society :

“ . . . I know you think I am foolishly gregarious and colourlessly sociable. The fact is, I have to mix with many people of all sorts and conditions : Jews, Christians, nondescripts, educated and uneducated, rich, poor and middle class—very middle classy, some of them.

“ Now, I always try and pull out a brick in the wall that divides us, and find that by this exercise I begin to

get on with *all styles* ; if I were not to do so, I should have a wretched life."

And so it was. With her vivid interests and quick sympathies this could not have proved as difficult to her as it would have been to many people. In fact, I never met anyone with whom she could not find some point of contact. Mr. Herbert Paul, the historian, writes of his small boy :

"Humphrey said to me the other day, 'Poppa, I wish Mrs Flower wasn't married.' I asked why. 'Because I should so like to marry her.' I said : 'what makes you so fond of her?' 'Her conversation, Poppa.'"

And this opinion of her conversation was evidently shared by men like Lord Morley, Lord Haldane and Lord Rosebery.

Reviewing the year 1899 she writes :

"The International Congress the *subject* that most occupied my thoughts this year. Countless meetings to get it into shape ; then ten days of meetings. I was put into a very prominent place, owing to dear Mrs Booth's illness. . . .

"Of family events : . . . Evelina's¹ engagement and marriage on October 4th to Clive Behrens. This was a new departure for the family and gave unqualified satisfaction to the Community at large.² . . ."

"New acquaintances : . . . Miss Cholmondeley."

Continuing her epitome of 1899, Lady Battersea writes :

"Overstrand is grown into a large and tiresome place. Lewises and Alexanders are going to build, and a big Hotel will be close to us. No longer country. I cannot say

¹ Lady Rothschild's daughter.

² Just about a hundred years before, the ancestors of the bride and bridegroom had left Germany together, one settling in the north of England, the other in the south.

I am pleased, but our garden is large and pretty and in every way it satisfies Cyril—the great thing—. For many reasons, however, a watering place better than a country place.”

“...Thirteen visits to Convict Prison. Interesting. Some cases difficult, baffling, hopeless, exasperating ; but I like the work exceedingly. There is some stuff, some backbone in it.

“ FEBRUARY 7th, 1900 : Death of Adolphe de Rothschild. Heard almost at the same time of his illness and decease. I had not seen him since '81. . . .

“ What palaces he had ; a splendid house in Paris, and Pregny, really a lovely property. What fun I had there more than thirty years ago, when I was young and light-hearted. Ahime !

“ FEBRUARY 14th : Lunched at 38, Berkely Square with Rosebery. What an interesting man he is ; delightful *en petit comité*, and always charming with me. . . .”

Reviewing the year, she writes of the

“ death of Emily Harris. What a break in my life, connected with my earliest work—visiting and Sabbath Class. Am very anxious to reconstitute the same. . . .

“ My Work :— Have paid seventeen visits to the prison, including Board Meetings. Really am doing some good there. One Jewish prisoner for me to look after. . . .”

On February 2nd, 1901, she describes Queen Victoria's funeral.

“ Early bestir. Our Queen's passing through London. Cold, grey, biting, but not foggy. People about in the streets all night.

“ At 7.30 police everywhere, soldiers advancing through the Park, men and women fringing the pavement, black garments, crape, black bows on whips—all black !

“ At nine, breakfast, in great discomfort, guests arriving, all places beginning to fill up : roof, balconies, gallery, windows, leads, stand.

“ At ten, crowds outside, an ambulance station under our windows, biting wind, but a lift in the sky.

" At 11.15, heard the booming of the first minute gun, announcing that the melancholy *cortège* had arrived at Victoria Station. The crowds were now terrific to behold and the view from the roof extraordinary.

" At 11.45 the troops forming part of the procession began to defile, some at a swinging, smart pace, some very slowly, in fine, marching order; troops from all the different regiments—the blue-jackets most attractive. The crowd very orderly. The tension becoming extreme.

" At 12.15 saw in the dim distance the central, sad, sad object of interest.

" At 12.30 *exactly*, through the great gates of the Marble Arch, came the little gun carriage, bearing the remains of our beloved Queen—a strange funeral car, not appropriate, not very impressive, at least not to my mind, with the Standard floating upon it with the Crown, the Sceptre and the Orb.

" And close behind it, King and Kaiser, the latter quite magnificent, like a statue carved in stone on his white charger. Then a crowd of royalties, whom no one much observed.

" Troops passing on, a long procession and then, all over. A sigh of relief. What a strain and tension to one's nerves it had been."

" . . . Words seem to express less than facts in this case. Black, mourning London, black, mourning England, black, mourning Empire—those facts are text and sermon.

" The emptiness of the great city without the feeling of the Queen's living presence in her Empire, and the sensation of universal change haunted me more than any other sensations.

" Dined with G. Russell. Only Annie as other guest. Charming evening, cultivated host, no jarring note, thank God!

" Saturday, February 2nd, 1901, will never be forgotten, no matter by how many pageants, how much pomp it is succeeded.

" FEBRUARY 14th: The first opening of Parliament by the new King, not one fortnight after the funeral of his great predecessor.

" Cold again, with a bitter North East wind, but no

snow and a slight lifting in the sky. King's weather, as we shall learn to call it.

"I was dressed punctually at 11.30, low, soft, dull, black silk, becoming to my years and figure, a diamond necklace, rows of pearls on the body, diamond chain, diamond stars, diamond and pearl tiara. Cyril in plain clothes and robes. We started at the half hour. It took us exactly thirty minutes to drive to the House. Crowds of most orderly people, as usual now, all in black. It was a grey, ugly day, but still, an unmistakable air of *fiesta* about the streets. We entered the House of Lords at the striking of the hour, and, card in hand, I proceeded to my place, up a number of stairs, along some corridors, stairs again, and there we were in the Reporters' Gallery. Hard wooden benches, with no backs, were not inviting, but I managed to get into the front seat, near Lady Playfair and between two strange ladies, one a very amusing woman, the wife of a Commoner, Horner by name. The Peers began to assemble, all in scarlet robes, like a brilliant bed of geraniums, and round them a black fringe of ladies. The fringe sparkled with diamonds, and nodded with plumes and fluttered with veils and some young, pretty faces peeped out from beneath the veils. There was a low buzz of talk that dropped into silence as the first members of the Royal Family appeared. The old Duke of Cambridge, very tottering, the Duke of Connaught, fine and manly, then the royal Princesses, all in deep mourning with crape veils and the broad white ribbon of the Victorian Order across their breasts. They looked like Abbesses, or belonging to some religious order. Amongst them all Princess Louise was distinguished by her fine, expressive face and graceful figure. Then a wait, until we heard the guns and knew that the glass coach was approaching. At last they came, with a brilliant escort, a strange, mediæval procession, the Royal Crown, the Sword of State, the Cap of Maintenance borne by the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Londonderry and Lord Winchester. The King and Queen in state robes, long, red, velvet mantles with ermine collars, the trains carried by pages. The Queen was a vision of *loveliness*. She bore herself with dignity and modesty, and her grace

was extraordinary. Every eye turned upon her and one felt that she held the Assembly. Her high, black dress, glittering with diamonds, her little crown and crape veil, all suited her to perfection.

"They took their places upon their thrones and waited we all waited, it seemed an interminable time, whilst the faithful Commons were sent for. How they came, helter skelter, like a rushing torrent! I could not see them from my seat, but I could hear them.

"Then the King made the declaration of faith, word for word, after the Chancellor who said the words kneeling. They are rather an anomaly at the present day, declaring that the Mass is superstition and idolatry. This His Majesty had to say with the Premier Duke and Earl Marshal, a devout Roman Catholic, standing behind him. Then the King rose, placed his cocked hat on his head and read his Speech in the clearest, most beautiful accents.

"And so the pageant ended. The King and Queen rose, bowed and curtsied low, we all bowed and curtsied, and out they passed, with Crown, Sword of State, cap of Maintenance borne behind them, followed by Princes and Princesses, Peers and Peeresses. . . .

"OVERSTRAND: . . . Saw a little, but not a great deal, of Lady Alice Stanley [now Countess of Derby], who is one of the brightest and cleverest society women whom I know. I lunched at Blickling with my beloved Lady Lothian and she came once to see me, with Mrs Alfred Talbot. I thought she looked more frail, more delicate, more ethereal than ever. . . . On the 9th of October, I read in the *Eastern D. Press* that Constance, Marchioness of Lothian, was seriously ill. . . . At 10.30 she passed quietly away. We heard the terrible news next day at one, and at 3.30 I was at Blickling. . . . Grief everywhere. I walked up to the house, that beautiful, stately pile, and saw . . . that dear, sweet, beautiful form, from which the soul had flown."

I next give a letter from George Meredith, evidently in answer to an invitation from Lord Battersea:

“ Box Hill, Dorking. Sept. 16th, 1901.

“ MY DEAR LORD BATTERSEA,

“ How gladly would I have come. But I resemble that chatty Black Prince in the Arabian Tale, whose inferior portion had been stricken by magic into marble. Or more like the painful hero of a ballad that interested and disturbed my infancy : he being in the sea pursued by a shark, and—His Half leaped from the wave !—the lower part going to the voracious one. So leap I to you in desperate fancy ; the better part of me, that is.

“ I shall embark my faith in motor-cars, to give me some sight of you.

“ My respects with as much love as is allowed me, to Lady Battersea.

“ Most heartily your

“ GEORGE MEREDITH.”

At the end of the year Lady Battersea writes :

“ I am President of the National Union of Woman Workers.

“ I certainly did not want that honour—I tried hard to get out of it, but I was talked over. High, Low, Broad, all the Churches, even Cyril, urged me to accept, and so I did, but not without fear and trembling.

“ I was duly appointed on October 29th, after a five hours' Council meeting, when we were all so worn out that no one took heed of the fact, but I was much congratulated by the Executive. Will they be equally pleased with me at the end of next year ? ”

In November she paid a visit to Paris, to a younger cousin, “ Jeanne,” Baroness Leonino, who took her round to various institutions. In a letter to her Mother she describes her visits to the Préfecture de Police and to the Secretariat :

“ 102 Avenue Malakoff.

“ November 9th 1901.

“ . . . Paris looks remarkably like London, grey, dirty and misty, but to-day it is a warm mist and I am sitting

with an open window, as, for my taste, the rooms and passages and staircases are too stuffy ! I go about opening windows on the sly and taking logs of wood off the fire.

" I began my '*business*' yesterday, accompanied by Jeanne, who is a most faithful companion, and is not to be daunted by anything. We were at the Préfecture de Police at ten in the morning, where the Directeur informed us that Lady Battersea had the right to visit all the prisons of Paris and the neighbourhood, whenever that lady should appear ; thereupon I informed the Directeur that I was the lady in question. Great *politesse* ensued—bows on both sides. Madame Bogelot, one of the ladies of the International Congress, who belongs to the Ordre des Libérées in France, escorted us over the Dépôt de la Police, at least, the female side, which is under the care of les sœurs Marie Joseph. It is a kind of receiving house for all the police cells of Paris, the homeless, the starving, the helpless, the waifs, &c., where they go before they are drafted on to prisons, homes, to the *streets*, or to their ordinary life.

" We saw batches of unfortunate girls coming to report themselves to the Police des Mœurs, and looked into the large, dingy salle, where they sat talking, chattering, laughing, smoking, dressing, combing their hair, &c. It was very gruesome, still worse to see the gendarmes taking them to the doctors and then leading them out again. The whole place is very dark and grimy.

" Near the Préfecture is the Secretariat, where Madame Bogelot's good work commences. This was really inaugurated by Madame Caralie Cohen, thirty years ago. A Committee of ladies are at hand to look after the women who leave the depot and assist them with clothes, money, advice, &c.

" Many of these poor creatures are perfectly innocent, and have merely been taken to the Préfecture because they happened to be homeless or ill in the streets, and are unable to give a proper account of their whereabouts.

" ' In fact,' as Madame Bogelot said to me, ' if you were to be lost in the Paris streets and forget your address, you would be brought *here* ! '

" I shall certainly try *not* to forget my address. . . . "

On November 13th, 1901, she visited Nanterre, which she describes in her journal :

" . . . A large building, or several large buildings, with the unmistakable prison air about them. Received politely by the Directeur. Found Madame Bogelot. . . ."

After describing the prison, she goes on :

" At the back of the Prison there are enormous buildings, answering to our English workhouses, on the one side, men, on the other women and children. Work supplied. No recreation, nothing humanising or softening. I thought the whole thing rather *horrid*. Insufficient food, canteen system, entire separation of sexes. No attempt at comfort, or anything approaching to the most elementary ideas of beauty. Men's faces ugly, low, common.

" Felt that here, as, I suppose, elsewhere, crime is the result in many cases of extreme poverty and misery."

She visited various other prisons and similar institutions, in all of which she was most interested, and which she describes in full in her journal. On November 17th she tells of her visit to the great prison of St. Lazare.

" . . . Knocked at the great door. It opened and admitted me into a large court and most dreary room. There sat Madame Bogelot and two Jewish ladies, to my amazement, all quite friends. We entered that *huge, dark, grim* prison. It reminded one of the Middle Ages ! We went up-stairs, through long corridors, past doors that were bolted, into the church.

" Upstairs we were conducted into the gallery and sat next to the choir, composed of prisoners. Below the *filles en cartes*. The singing touching, reminding me of the Salvation Army hymns. The Aumonier said a few very beautiful words, no sermon. . . ."

The following day she is, on the whole, favourably impressed by her visit to Clermont, particularly by the fact that

"the women at Clermont can earn three francs daily, half of which money is put by for them, half of which they receive."

On November 19th she writes to her mother :

" 102 Avenue Malakoff.

" November 19th, 1901.

"... To-day two Jewish ladies, one a sister of our Mrs Halford, are coming to luncheon and we are going to visit a small Jewish refuge. I find that there is an immense wish for 'reform'—I mean, religious reform, among a certain number of the Community. They have invited me to talk to them about *Claude* [Montefiore] and about what is being done in England. They imagined that our Conference next May would be on religious subjects, and some of them intend to come. They are almost pathetic in their wish to have better services and a more sensible form of religion, for they feel that the old order is passing away. A very remarkable young rabbi, who is installed at Dijon, would be at the head of the reform movement, should it succeed in taking root in Paris. I find less Anti-Semitism amongst the serious people, than I had imagined. It flourishes amongst the *mondains* and corrupt...

"In prisons and refuges, Catholics, Protestants and Jews work well together. I am very glad that I have seen these things, which are unknown to the family.

"Some of the Catholics, Madame Bogelot, for example, who is at the head of 'L'Ordre des Libérées,' stood courageously by her Jewish friends during the whole of the Dreyfus affair, so the Jewish ladies told me!...

She shrewdly observes that she thought

"much harm had been done by a certain number of vulgar and ostentatious Jews and Jewesses, who were the cause of some, if not the whole, of Anti-Semitism."

Her journal continues the next year :

" Aston Clinton.

Sunday, April 13th, 1902.

"My dear old aunt, Mrs Nathaniel Montefiore, died at

12, Portman Square at eight in the morning after an illness of seven weeks, ending in peaceful death."

She sent a long obituary notice of her to the *Jewish Chronicle*.

The Coronation of King Edward VII on August 9th is described :

" It was feudal, mediæval, English, yet imperial. It held one enthralled through eye, ear and heart. It was religious, and yet of this world. It was very big, yet appealed to the individual.

" It represented all that has made England great, and was an open door to all the various creeds and races that owe fealty to the Throne.

" The King was at his finest. The monarch, yet the husband and father. He looked proud, touched, humble. He rose to greet his beautiful Queen and smiled as she advanced in her glorious crown. He embraced the Prince of Wales fondly and clung to his hand. He was solicitous when the Archbishop failed to rise from his knees and, bending over him, helped him to rise. He was gladdened and amused by the shouts of the Westminster boys, his heart was evidently touched throughout, as was evident in the letter he penned to his subjects.

" I fully enjoyed the day. To me it was inspiring as well as interesting."

Speaking of the annual Conference of the National Council of Women Workers, of which she was at this time President, she gives an extraordinarily true and impartial description of herself :

" I enjoyed the work ; frankly, I enjoyed the position. I think my address was good, above the average. My tact and sympathy and good temper saved one or two awkward moments, but I fail in knowledge of business, in quickness, in brain power. I am not ready at framing resolutions, I do not always seize the point, I lack decision. But I feel that I am learning. . . ."

In April 1903 she travelled on the Continent with her husband. On April 29th she writes from Amsterdam :

" Sixtieth *birthday*. Oh, dear !

" I was in Amsterdam in 1874 on my birthday twenty-nine years ago."

In June 1904 she attended the International Conference of Women in Berlin. She describes the various meetings in her journal :

" JUNE 14th, 1904 : Heard a most interesting discourse and debate on *Volkschulen*. Had much agreeable talk with the speakers. Very intelligent women. . . .

" June 16th : . . . My address came first.

" I delivered it in German to a good and most attentive audience. Extremely well received. Much applause. I did not feel in the least shy, and really got through my ordeal very creditably.

" I was not *much* impressed by the speeches. Too long and too many. Atmosphere awful. . . .

" I went with Frau Deutsch in her Motor Car. A terrific pace. Delightful through the woods, but heat very great. . . . A good deal of bumping."

I give an extract from a letter to her mother :

" . . . The most amusing thing to see here is the new *reform* dress in which many ladies indulge. They look perfectly straight, like columns, no waist, but occasionally much *stomach* and *hips*. When the wearer is young and slender it is not so bad, but after middle life, and when the middle age spread has declared itself, it is very *un-graceful*. But it is all the fashion !

" Evidently nothing presses on the waist, the one garment to be seen hangs from the shoulders, and the same must be the case below the dress.

" Yesterday afternoon we went to a delightful garden-party. . . .

" In this world of women, two of the male sex whom I met at one of the meetings, an American and a Hungarian, were most amiable in looking after me and getting me cards of invitation, for mine have all gone astray. I think

to have monopolised *two* men amongst three thousand females was rather a feat!

"Miss Clifford, our charming and beautiful President, was received with others by the Empress this morning, and we feel that England was worthily represented. She has had a great success here. . . .

"We are amused in the evening, when we dine at a Restaurant, seeing the officers peeling peaches into their tall wine glasses and pouring champagne over them. There is not much Temperance *here*."

At the end of the Conference she writes :

"JUNE 18th: . . . Frau Strill spoke eloquently at the end. I missed, however, the higher note with which we always draw our Conferences to a close. There is something wanting in the Woman's Movement, as I see it here. . . ."

Needless to say, she took advantage of this opportunity to visit several German prisons and schools, in which she found much to interest her.

Looking back on 1904 she writes :

"My dear Miss Cobbe's death in the early part of the year came as a sad blow to me. We had been friends for nearly thirty years and she had been a real factor in my life. She, in a way, helped me out of Judaism into Theism, but I have not remained where she led me. I feel that I require more doctrine, more creed, more help in life, which is a difficult and very complicated business.

"I have seen a great deal of Cyril's family ; nieces and nephews practically live here. . . .

"I still take delight in all those things that used to give me most pleasure—in books, nature, travel and bright conversation. I make few new friends and see the old ones rarely.

"I should enjoy more social life, but can do without it, and do not care for the big crowds in the summer.

"The Jewish question seems to meet me at every turn, and I am enormously interested in the development of the Jewish Religious Union, also in Claude and his work.

"I have cut myself off from much of Judaism and am only at the very outer gates of Christianity. There I shall never enter, although it attracts me."

However, if we look back to page 265, we see the strong hold which the old traditional ritual of her fathers made on Lady Battersea. She might criticize the services, but she always reverted to the religion of her youth; for its roots were deeply embedded in love, remembrance and association. Of Claude Montefiore's opinions, although much of them appealed to her, yet we find her writing:

"The Pleasaunce.

"... I am delighted with Claude's book. It is so plucky and interesting and original. He states his case well, and if he would only start a synagogue on his own lines would at once have a following. Of that I *feel certain*. It would be a splendid piece of real reform. This book may possibly stimulate the Reform Synagogue to go further than they have done hitherto; but the Executive body will be held back by the older and more orthodox members so that there must be friction, should there be an attempt at progress. I think he makes too little of the *race*—that is still a very predominant feature in Judaism, and I should doubt if the religious tie without the racial one be strong enough to hold the Jewish people as a Community together. . . ."

Aprópos of church-going, she observes in 1910:

"I hope I am not doing wrong. Sometimes I think I am acting a lie, because I am not a Christian, but I am a woman with spiritual longings and I love public worship. I like the day of rest, the pause in the week, the time to think, to put away worldly things, to deny oneself some amusement. . . ."

Therefore, the services at her Overstrand church were often a solace and a help to her. She could join in a great part of them so whole-heartedly that

many people believed her to be a Christian. But in her inmost mind there was always the reservation that she could only "worship at the outer gates."

Her life, in its many-sidedness, made for tolerance and reverence for all religions, but she was at her happiest when she wrote upon Jewish subjects. I showed my father¹ the proofs of some of her short articles on the Jewish holy days, and he wrote :

"I like these papers extremely, and think the article on Passover quite charming ; it warms my Jewish heart and makes me feel I belong to a peculiar race, of which and of whose history I am proud. There is a magnificent passage in one of Lord Chatham's speeches, and also in one of Burke's orations, in which they speak of the high and noble feelings called forth by a long series of illustrious ancestors, and certainly the man who simply conceives himself the first member of the family, with nothing to connect himself in blood, history and destiny with the past is a very stunted individual. . . ."

And as he felt, so, I think, did Constance Battersea.

In 1905 she writes from Overstrand :

"Edward Lyttelton is our neighbour here for some weeks in the year. A delightful personage and a fascinating preacher, otherwise the set is Bohemians, and non-observant Jews."

And on May 26th she records :

"Death of my dearly beloved cousin, Alphonse de Rothschild. . . ."

"I appreciated his company and loved being with him.

"He was devoted to my darling Mother and enjoyed her society. They were kindred spirits in many ways. . . ."

In June she and her husband visited Carlsbad for

¹ The Rt. Hon. Arthur Cohen, K.C.

the sake of his health. They arrived on May 30th, and on May 31st she writes :

" Rosebery wins the Derby for the third time. Japs beat Russians in naval warfare. Letters from home. Walked all the afternoon with Cyril in and out of shops. He bought linen and glass in quantities. . . ."

By this time Lord Battersea had bought a car, which he took with him to Carlsbad, and she writes :

" I cannot quite make up my mind whether I do really like a motor car.

" It is not to be compared to a comfortable carriage, drawn by powerful, fresh horses, and I see no object in going at a breakneck pace. One is always looking out for dangers ahead and, like everything of this Century, it is not conducive to conversation. Interchange of ideas, drawing out of thought, must give way before golf, bridge and motoring.

" I am not of the age or of the pace. Cyril enjoys his motor and his drives and it makes him less restive at having, as it were, to lead rather a different life, owing to his repeated and tiresome attacks of illness. . . ."

In October she visited her mother at Aston Clinton, when Lady de Rothschild writes :

" OCTOBER 10th, 1905 : Our Fast Day—a *feast*, not a fast, as dear Connie is with me. I wonder if it will be my last on these shores—that thought ought to urge me on to do my best to improve my poor self and be of some little use before I depart."

Towards the end of the year Lady Battersea writes :

" Revolution in Russia, terrible massacre of Jews. Miserable state of things. I long to send substantial help, but cannot ! My cousins working *nobly*."

The following year she and her husband again

spent most of the summer at Carlsbad. She writes on June 9th :

"... Shocked at Cyril's appearance and at his low spirits. . . ."

"JUNE 26th : Heard all about the Queen's visit to the Pleasaunce. Very successful, I think. Cyril pleased."

It was very unfortunate that on another visit which Queen Alexandra paid to the Pleasaunce Lady Battersea was again absent. Miss Knollys, Secretary to the Queen, writes an account of the second visit.

" Sandringham, Norfolk.

" August 4th, 1911.

" DEAR LADY BATTERSEA,

" When your telegram arrived I was just going to begin this letter to you to tell you from the Queen how much she enjoyed her visit to the Pleasaunce—her only regret being that *you* were not there yourself. The Dowager Empress¹ accompanied the Queen and they were both perfectly *delighted* with the place which really looked too beautiful for words, and Sir D. Probyn, who as you know is a great gardener himself was in raptures. At first we were—very properly—refused admittance! The Queen rang the bell and on the door being opened she said ' I should like to see the place,' and the servant—I think it was a footman—answered—' I am afraid you cannot.' ' Oh yes', says the Queen, ' I am a great friend of your mistress ;' but still he was obdurate, taking the Party no doubt for '*Trippers*', upon which Sir Dighton came forward and whispered in his ear who it was! Then your head man came and the Gardener and nothing could exceed the civility of everyone. We had brought our own tea and they provided hot water, and I personally have seen the place twice before, but the beauty of it *this* time struck me more than I can possibly tell you. Everything has grown up so and

¹ Of Russia.

all your improvements are in their prime now. I am afraid there is no chance of the Queen's being here in September, as she is sure to have arrived in Denmark by that time—and it seems to me as if we were more likely to meet you *there*. I must bring this long letter to a close now, but I thought you would like to hear all about the visit to Overstrand.

“Yours affectionately,
“CHARLOTTE KNOLLYS.”

In 1906 Lord Battersea's ill health gave her great anxiety during the time that they were at Carlsbad, and at the end of June her sister joined her for a couple of weeks—a source of great comfort and delight. On July 9th she writes :

“... Dear Annie made all her arrangements for leaving. How sad. This has been a happier week. I shall never forget Annie's goodness in having come. She is a trump.”

By the end of July her husband's health was sufficiently recovered for them both to return to England.

After Lord Battersea's death on the 27th November, 1907, Lady Battersea briefly sums up in her journal the last few years of his life :

“... 1904, told by Doctor Smelt of his illness [diabetes]. He wrote [in his diary] ‘Sono contento.’ Three, no four years, getting steadily worse, wretchedly ill and suffering, depressed, low, oh, how changed. . . .”

The final stage of Lord Battersea's illness came suddenly, when he was touring in the Isle of Wight with a friend, and Lady Battersea and his sister were sent for to Ryde only a few days before the end.

Naturally this came as a great shock to her and she was very broken on her return to Overstrand. After having his body embalmed, so that the people



THE HON. MRS. ELIOT YORKE, 1923

Nellie G. Smith

there might look upon him once more, she laid him to rest there in the village churchyard.

Lady Battersea suddenly found herself, quite unaccustomed as she was to business, plunged into very complicated affairs, and discovered that Lord Battersea's taste for building and for art had involved his estate in great financial difficulties. With Mr. Alfred Rothschild's advice and Lady de Rothschild's help, the liabilities were all cleared and the Pleasaunce became her own property. Wherever it was possible, she carried out Lord Battersea's desires, and the Pleasaunce was bequeathed, as he wished, to his niece, Miss Brand, of whom she writes :

" Dolly a great deal with me ; very dear, very much attached to me and to the place."

But three years before her death, in accordance with Miss Brand's request, the will was changed, Miss Brand feeling that owing to the fall in the yield of her securities she could not keep up the place as Lady Battersea would have wished. Lady Battersea consulted her cousins, and with their consent the Pleasaunce was left with all the contents to Mr. Lionel de Rothschild's eldest daughter (now Mrs. Denis Berry), when she should be of age.¹ Every year Lady Battersea grew increasingly attached to her Norfolk home. In 1910 she wrote :

" Came to my sweet country home. *I love it.* Never so quietly happy, so contented as I am here."

¹ The Pleasaunce is now for sale, and many of its contents have already been sold.

CHAPTER XIII

1907-1914

*Death of Lady de Rothschild—Meeting with the Kaiser—
Lord Rosebery—Lord Balfour*

LADY BATTERSEA gradually resumed her former pursuits ; but, besides these, she now was immersed in practical matters which were quite novel to her. Lord Battersea had superintended and planned everything outside the house, and even inside it. The gardens had been his great joy. With her usual conscientiousness she tried to master the names of the various plants and flowers and had reports made to her about the cottages on the estate ; in fact, from this time forth, she wished nothing to be done without her knowledge or permission. At times she became very much worried over the inevitable friction of a large household. It was difficult to her to make decisions. " I am a wobbler," she would bewail. Her craving was above all for happiness among those about her or dependent on her. She derived real pleasure, however, in continuing to maintain the library and village reading-room, in supervising the village nurse and the school. Till the War, she more or less kept open house ; and her old friends, such as the Bernard Mallets and their sons and Sir Algernon West, and one or two of her cousins and her husband's nieces and nephews, constantly stayed with her.

Her Saturday Teas became quite an institution, when she gathered round her a most varied circle of friends—"people of fashion," politicians, writers, artists, and philanthropists. In fact, Mrs. Yorke speaks of Overstrand in the summer as "a little Weimar," and adds,

"it has certainly a magnetic power of drawing literary and intellectual people together."

In London Lady Battersea returned to her old activities and received her friends; while, until Aston Clinton was regretfully given up, she and her sister stayed there once or twice a year and helped in their mother's many undertakings.

In 1908, in going through her husband's papers, she writes :

"Dear Cyril has kept every one of my letters from the first !"

And :

"JULY 23rd, 1908: Have been eleven weeks at Overstrand. I have done so little all the time and meant to have done so *much*. Ahime! Have found all the diaries. Am making his room into a botanical and horticultural library. It hurts me to leave this place. God help me! Have not yet placed the memorial upon the grave. It will, I hope, be *beautiful*."

The stone, when completed, bore the singularly appropriate inscription :

"I warm'd both hands before the fire of life ;
It sinks, and I am ready to depart."

At the end of the year Lady Battersea

"recommenced Committee work in a way. Motored to London on Sunday, November 15th. . . ."

In 1909 she writes :

"... I have left Surrey House, have dismantled it, have sold many of the things, have taken, re-built and furnished a new house. I have not yet sold Surrey House."

"A new maid, a new house-keeper, new men servants, new laundry maids—not one who knew dear Cyril—how strange it all feels."

Many will doubtless remember that the site where Surrey House once stood at Marble Arch is that now occupied by the Regal Cinema, and that during the War the house was used for the War Library.

She writes, on March 30th, 1909 :

"Sold engravings and prints at Christie's. . . . Like work connected with accounts and business. Wish I could have done more in my young days. We all ought to have been brought up with a thorough knowledge of business."

"MAY 15th, 1909 : Death of Mrs Wilberforce. . . .

"Annie suffered for and with the Archdeacon. She was with his wife daily until almost the end. Hamble Cliff was the first house he went to."

"NOVEMBER 2nd. Overstrand : Opened the newly added-to Reading-room. It really did my heart good to see what a nice, bright, cheerful place the men now possessed. . . ."

"NOVEMBER 15th. Aston Clinton : Charmed to be again with my dear, dear Mother. Really she is the youngest person here."

"FEBRUARY 6th, 1910 : . . . Slept at 10, Connaught Place for the first time. Like my dear, charming little house."

"MAY 5th : Heard of the King's illness ; alarming news."

"MAY 6th : Terrible day. The King died at 10.45 p.m. Greatest loss England could have."

I quote two letters from Miss Knollys, secretary to Queen Alexandra, written in answer to letters of condolence from Lady Battersea :

" Buckingham Palace. June 18th, 1910.

" MY DEAR LADY BATTERSEA,

" I am sure you will forgive me when I tell you that I literally *could* not answer your letter sooner.

" The Queen desired me particularly to let you know how sensible she is of your kind sympathy and to express to you her heartfelt thanks. It is sad to see her now with her life, as she herself expresses it, ' come to an end,' and *everything* in her existence changed !

" With best love,

" Yours affectionately,

" CHARLOTTE KNOLLYS."

" Sandringham, Norfolk. December 22nd, 1910.

" MY DEAR LADY BATTERSEA,

" Queen Alexandra is so much touched by your letter and your *understanding*, heartfelt sympathy and desired me to thank you most sincerely. Her Majesty feels that *you* knew from experience what the sadness of this first Xmas without *him* must be—and she is indeed to be pitied—such a contrast to this time last year, when our beloved King was the life and centre of everything !

" Yours very affectionately,

" CHARLOTTE KNOLLYS."

Little more than a month after this national loss, Lady Battersea experienced a more intimate sorrow. She writes in her journal :

" JUNE 11th: Heard of Mamma's serious fall. Fractured hip joint. Back to London in alarm. Sad, anxious time. . . ."

" NOVEMBER: On June 10th dear Mamma went out driving in perfect health.

" She came home a wreck, never to talk again.

" She lived until September 22nd—in pain, discomfort, doctors' visits nearly all day, five nurses. She never read a book or wrote a line, or saw anyone alone after that date—she was an invalid—a hopeless one.

" On August 4th we went to Aston Clinton. She enjoyed the change—went out in a bath chair, drove out

a few times in her ambulance bus. And then came the collapse.

"She was dying for ten days. She left us on September 22nd, almost sleeping away.

"... Michael Adler... held a beautiful little service downstairs in the large room. . . .

"On Monday she was taken from her old home at eight in the morning.

"I could not see her go—but all the villagers were out, children and all. It made my heart sick. The people really, truly mourned.

"On Tuesday, memorial service in London. Very fairly good. Satisfactory attendance. Back to Aston Clinton.

"Arrangements with servants. Visit on Saturday from Natty. The three brothers beg of us to remain at Aston Clinton. We consent... [Aston Clinton had reverted to the Rothschild estate.]

"Left Aston Clinton on Thursday, October 20th for London. From that date until now, November, 4th, constantly occupied at 19, Grosvenor Place. Very heart-breaking work. . . .

"In London until November 26th. A harrowing, tiring time. Nearly all our beautiful possessions sold . . . about £132,000 in cash. . . ."

Looking through her mother's papers, she writes :

"Have been reading a great many old letters. Some very beautiful ones from Aunt Charlotte, Mamma's sister ; charming ones from Mamma's brothers. . . .

"I have learnt a good deal from the letters and they have interested me, but reading them has been heart-rending work and at times I had to pause and remember that nearly all who had penned those lines were gone ! Dear, dear, blessed Mother—how I miss you ; how I long for you ! How changed is my life without you !"

There is a charming little memoir of her mother, which Lady Battersea wrote for private circulation.

Lady de Rothschild excited a peculiar admiration

and affection from others than her daughters. Years ago Matthew Arnold had written :

" . . . I cannot tell you what a pleasure it was to me personally to be at Aston Clinton again and to find your dear mother if possible more herself—that is more sweet, more attaching than ever."

And Lord Rosebery on her death must have even satisfied Constance's affection by what he wrote in the following letter :

" . . . What a sweet and noble life it has been, wonderfully prolonged for the blessing of all she knew. It leaves a fragrance behind it. I shall not easily forget that little sitting room, with the quiet figure and the kind, bright face in the midst. . . . Her friendship was priceless to me ; for I only gained it in my later life, and I wanted to enjoy all that I could of it. . . .

" Everybody loved her that knew her, and no one was with her without being the better for it. If it be thus for others, what must it be for the daughters who have had her close to their hearts all their lives.

" But for you and all of us her blessed and beautiful memory is a possession of which death cannot rob us. . . ."

Lady de Rothschild must have kept for her journal the sadder side of her nature, and her lighter qualities hardly emerge from these pages : her sense of fun, and her love of young people, and theirs for her. Although she was reserved and more of a listener than a talker, she was one of those listeners who, by their appreciation of wit and humour, as well as of goodness, draw out all that is best and most brilliant in their companions. Even when she was an old lady, the young as well as the old could be found enjoying a quiet hour with her on her Saturday afternoons at Grosvenor Place, when up to the end she herself poured out her tea and looked after her guests.

Lady Battersea resumes her journal in 1911, when she writes :

" JANUARY 6th : Prison board meeting. On my return to Connaught Place, read in the *Westminster Gazette* of dear Laurie's death. Gave me a fearful shock . . .

" LAURIE.

" So beautiful in her youth, so radiant—with such a future before her !

" Such a brilliant married life, such possibilities, such a husband . . . ! "

In July, 1911, Lady Battersea, with her two very pretty nieces, Constance Flower and Mrs. Head, and Mr. Head, joined Mrs. Yorke on a cruise in the Baltic, where she met the Kaiser on board his yacht, the *Hohenzollern*. Mrs. Yorke had already made his acquaintance on a previous cruise.

She writes in her journal :

" FRIDAY, JULY 20th, 1911 : Early after breakfast, received an invitation to lunch on the Hohenzollern. Began watching the regatta, the Emperor steering his gig—he is always supposed to win the race.

" At one o'clock boarded the Hohenzollern. Received by the Captain of the ship, *Captain Platin*.

" Taken to the upper deck. In a few moments the Emperor appeared in the undress of an Admiral. He is shorter than I imagined and has a slight stoop, but oh ! what a clever face, and what piercing eyes. He put us at our ease at once.

" He introduced about sixteen gentlemen to me, not only by name, but also telling me who they were. This is a very good fashion, which we might imitate in England. The Emperor sat in the middle of the table on a raised seat, Annie and I sat on each side of him ; opposite was Prince Albert of Schleswig-Holstein with Daisy and Connie beside him. A long line of sailors stood behind our chairs, excellent waiters. Flowers and gold and silver plate on the table. The Emperor very talkative and easy

to get on with. I must try and recall some of the conversation that passed between us. We talked of the English royal family. His Imperial Majesty praised the King and Queen for their love of duty and the way in which they had commenced their reign. 'And what a moment to become King; not a moment that one would choose.' 'The Duchess of Teck was a charming and clever woman, a great friend of mine.'

"He spoke of 'Grandmamma' with affectionate respect, of 'Uncle Bertie,' 'Aunt Argyle.' Then of Louise, Duchess of Devonshire, of her sudden death on the race course, without any consolation of religion. 'I suppose there were no ministers of religion present. I should hope not, on a race course!'

"Then I mentioned Lord Haldane's name and told him how our War Minister had enjoyed seeing the Manœuvres under Imperial auspices.

"He remarked, 'Of course I showed him everything; we have nothing to fear. Why should we mind? We want to be good friends with you; but your Territorials will be your difficulty. Your Volunteers were excellent, full of enthusiasm, Lord Wemyss understood them well—but the Territorials!'

"'Well, Your Majesty, what do you think of them?'

"'I would rather not say. They are certainly not the Guards; the Guards are *splendid*. But you want a soldier at the head of your army—the Duke of Connaught or Lord Kitchener.'

"'Did your Majesty give your views to Lord Haldane?'

"'No, indeed not; he would only call me the tyrant ruler of a benighted country, and in England I know I have been called "a damned German." We ought to be good friends. Our two countries ought to march together, the same race, the same religion, the same interests. We should be friends; but we do not like our toes trodden upon, and we can tread back'—this with a glance like steel—'some people's shoes are too large for them!'

"We talked of conscription, of the Insurance Bill, of

Old Age Pensions, of Education, of Continuation Schools, of music, of Norway—humour, romance, political insight—all were apparent in the Emperor's conversation.

"He even asked Geoffrey how our two maids were getting on and said it was important to make those people comfortable.

"He was delighted with his reception in England and with the unveiling of the statue.

"He descanted upon the charms of Balholm, the little Norwegian watering place, and gave me an account of the ball he had had on board, of the pretty Norwegian girls, of some of the inhabitants of the place.

"He gave us an account of his Services on board; how he read prayers and preached someone else's sermon.

"We listened to the performance of the Band (forty strong) and then he, personally, showed us all over the yacht.

"The cabins are very simply, but very prettily and comfortably furnished. He pointed out his various photos and portraits and water colour drawings—a photo of his daughter in regimentals as Colonel of her regiment. He was always bright, amusing, interesting. I asked him his views upon free trade; he said that he was more of a free trader for England than a protectionist and he did not agree with reciprocity for the Empire. He went carefully into all the details on the subject and made it all very clear to me. What a grasp the man has! He is a very brilliant and distinguished personage and one whom it is an immense pleasure to have met in so informal and comfortable a way. I wish he could have known dear Cyril, I feel certain the two men would have been sympathetic to one another.

"It was sad to leave the Hohenzollern, the Emperor hanging over the gangway. He kissed my sister's hand and squeezed mine. I hope I may see him again, but not as our Conqueror."

Lady Battersea evidently sent this description some years later to Lord Rosebery, who writes:

“ Rosebery, Gorebridge, Midlothian.

“ Sept 7, 1915.

“ A thousand thanks for the extract from your journal which I find most interesting ; but I gather that you were quite bamboozled by William ! ”

In the autumn following this encounter, she visited Lord Rosebery. In her journal she writes :

“ Rosebery *delightful*. Much talk with him.”

In a letter to her sister, written probably at about this time, she describes another visit to Lord Rosebery :

“ Aston Clinton, Tring. August 4th.

“ Just back from Mentmore, where, in spite of truly fiendish weather, I had a very pleasant time. Rosebery was quite affectionate, and during long *tete-à-tetes* most interesting and less pompous.

“ We were quite alone, with the exception of Robin¹ yesterday, and talked over the whole family. “ . . . R. made me sit up with him until nearly twelve o'clock and gave me all his religious views.

“ He does not want to live much longer, for he says he knows that he will not fit into the new order of things that must inevitably come in the England of the future. He was quite pathetic and I felt what I always have felt with him, that he is at heart a great aristocrat and Conservative with very little feeling for the Democracy !

“ His adoration for Robin is quite touching. The Diary of that strange child amused us both very much. On Monday he had written, ‘ Grandpapa gave me some cyder cup at luncheon, which exhilarated me unduly and I *made a fool of myself*.’ R. did not quite like this and said it was not the case, but it appears that R. had talked a good deal and had told Constance Leconfield and Victoria² that he had read the book of Esdras, and knew all about the prophecy of which a good deal is being made just now. The two ladies were studying Esdras when I arrived !

“ The party of thirty-six scouts from Hammersmith,

¹ Son of his daughter, Lady Sybil Grant.

² His daughter-in-law, wife of Neil Primrose.

spending their holiday at Mentmore in a disused farm building, were a revelation to Rosebery; and he and I had quite an amusing time with them between the rain showers. Robin did not take much interest in these London youths; strange to say, he dislikes *everything military*; his whole heart is given up to Science: chemistry, engineering, &c. As Rosebery says: 'Where does this taste spring from?'

"I must say that Rosebery was delightful with the boys and enjoyed their enjoyment, but this came more from his love of children than love of the *city-born youngsters*, as I said before, the democracy!"

In October, 1911, Lady Battersea went to Whittinghame, where she was the guest of Arthur Balfour and his sister, Alice. This visit is also described in a letter to Mrs. Yorke:

"Whittinghame, Prestonkirk, N.B.

"October 17th.

"... I will now send you a few lines from this *delectable* spot.... Well, dear Annie, I am quietly happy and very comfortable here—quite at home with all my *old* friends. Arthur Balfour and Alfred Lyttelton are truly delightful, Frances and Betty very inspiring and original, Alice kind and hospitable, all the young ones full of life and vigour, leading a free and unconventional existence, utterly unknown in the mid-Victorian time. I amused A.B. by telling him what I should like to be if I were not myself:

"1. One of eight dogs,

"2. One of Natty's¹ grandchildren,

"3. One of the Whittinghame young ones.

"We have a lot of talk, literary, a little political—not much—a great deal about the Jews. A.B. is hugely interested in all Jewish questions. He gets a good deal of information from Natty, but naturally very one-sided. He asked a great deal about Claude—his books, his attitude, his influence. He wanted me to tell him

¹ Lord Rothschild's.

how C. stood with the Community and how his writings affected the Jewish Question.

"A.B. wants *intermarriage* for social and political reasons, and spoke most sensibly on the subject. We had a *tete-a-tete* from nine-thirty to eleven, on Sunday night, and I found A.B. a most interested listener. He is so '*fin*,' so cultured, so philosophical. He is very bitter (so are they all) about politics. It is best to keep away from the subject if one can.

"I lunched at Archerfield yesterday—a very different house. It was all very rough, untidy, uncomfortable. The P.M.¹ kind and extremely cordial—but how he is changed . . . ! Quite different from what he used to be. He gave me a shock . . ."

At the present time it is interesting to read of Lord Balfour's views on the Jewish Question, as he expresses them in a letter to a former Italian Prime Minister. I quote from a copy of the letter, which was in the possession of Lady Battersea :

"*Confidential.*

"4 Carlton Gardens, Pall Mall, S.W.

"May 15th, 1914.

"DEAR SIGNOR LUZZATTI,

"I have read with deep interest the Memorial signed by yourself and other statesmen who have held the office of Prime Minister in their respective countries ; and I desire to associate myself with them in the expression of an earnest hope that the revised Roumanian Constitution will remove the disabilities under which Roumanian Jews now suffer.

"It is with much hesitation that I venture to express an opinion with regard to the internal affairs of any country but my own. Two reasons, however, embolden me to do so in the present case.

"The first is that the civil and political rights of all sections of the Roumanian population are matters of European concern, dealt with by treaties which are still

¹ Mr. Asquith.

in force, and to which all the Great Powers have given their assent.

"The second is that, in common with most of my countrymen, I build high hopes on the part which Roumania is destined to play in the development of civilisation in Eastern Europe. And I ask myself how these hopes can be realised if, in a matter so important as the granting of civil rights, Roumania resolutely refuses to accept principles which govern the policy of all the rest of the Western World. A Roumanian Jew must pay taxes to a Government which does not count him as a citizen; he must fight for a Nation to which he is not permitted to belong; by law he is a stranger in the land of his birth, and, while he bears all the burdens of citizenship, he may not enjoy its commonest privileges.

"That such a state of things should still exist, and exist in the face of European treaties, must be a cause of deep regret to all lovers of Roumania—a regret which every increase in her wealth, culture, and influence can only make more poignant. It is most earnestly to be hoped that, during the approaching revision of her constitution, some opportunity will be sought and found for mitigating this crying evil.

"I beg to remain,

"With greatest respect,

"Yours faithfully,

"ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR."

I also quote from a letter on the same subject written to Lady Battersea by Mr. Israel Zangwill, the author.

"5 Elm Tree Road, St. John's Wood, N.W.

"February 1st.

"... Anybody reading the account of the Roumanian Jews... might conceivably be worked up to indignation against those who refuse even to consider a means of dealing by international action with the *Judenschmerz*. Spiritually and politically the Jew has now arrived at a parting of the ways. For seven centuries—since the

death of Maimonides—Israel has had no religious thinker. He has never—since the Dispersion—had a statesman. Dr Herzl is the nearest approach to a political thinker and leader that the Wandering Jew has had, since he began to wander. Discussing things the other day with Mr N. S. Joseph—a disbeliever in the practicability of Zionism—I learnt that Russia once promised to let the Jew out of the towns of the Pale, if only the Russo-Jewish Committee would cease from publishing revelations. The Committee ceased, but Russia went on as before. Now, here we had for a moment the thick end of the stick, yet how stupidly we seem to have wielded it. And Roumania, too, calmly goes on ignoring the conditions which Lord Beaconsfield obtained. It is a thousand pities Disraeli did not flourish later or Dr Herzl earlier. They should have met."

In 1912 Lady Battersea writes in her journal :

"SUNDAY, AUGUST 4th: My dear cousin, Blanche Lindsay, died after twenty-four hours' illness."

"MONDAY, AUGUST 5th: Bank Holiday: Sad news came in a telegram. I felt it terribly, my old friend and playmate gone."

"A second telegram brought me news of Lionel's engagement to Marie Louise Beer."

The following year, she writes of their marriage :

"FEBRUARY 25th: Wedding. Synagogue very full. All went off well; bride charming. . . ."

"MARCH 25th: Concert in prison. Alfred's band played beautifully. Great success. . . ."

"APRIL 29th: Birthday. SEVENTY. Oh dear, I am an old woman."

Somewhat later in the year, she writes :

"On Sunday morning, July 6th, at 2.40, there passed away one of the brightest and most beautiful of souls—Alfred Lyttleton."

"I first saw him in '70 at Cambridge, playing tennis in one of the College Courts, admired, beloved, idolized

by dons and undergraduates. I met him again at dinner, in J. W. Clarke's rooms, and I was won over at once by his charm, his versatility, his eager talk, his interest in everything.

"Then we often met, but perhaps it was in one of the College Gardens, the Roundabout, that I learnt to know and honour him from some few words that he then said to me.

"Later on he came to hunt at Aston Clinton. Kept his horses there and charmed us all by his delightful personality.

"He *could talk and could listen*. He was respectful to Mamma, chatty, agreeable, refined, yet manly and full of go and eagerness.

"I met him at Mentmore with Mr Gladstone and was so delighted when he became Member of Parliament. Then came the split and we saw less of him, but whenever we did meet, he was always delightful. And in 1911 we met him again and for some days at Whittingham. That was a red-letter time. Alas, I never proposed myself to dine with him and D.D.¹, as he asked me to do. And now it is all over—another one linked with the past gone—Ahime!"

"OCTOBER 23rd: Saw notice of Emily Lawless' *death* in the *Times*! Gave me a terrific shock. . . .

"'Hurrish' and 'Grania' are wonderful works—her poetry was original and forcible. . . ."

There is only space to quote a small extract from one of the many letters that Lady Battersea received from Miss Lawless, some written from the Guest house which had been lent to her. In June 1904 she writes:

"You cannot think what a true charity and benefaction the lending of this little abode has been to me."

and adds that she reported to a friend how peacefully her days flowed on, and the commotions of the world seemed to float away over her head,

¹ The Hon. Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton.

“ While I sit in my chair
quite regardless of strife,
on the edge of a shore
in a bye-way of life.”

That winter Lady Battersea mourns the loss of yet another of her friends, the brother of the Hon. Alfred Lyttelton :

“ DECEMBER 5th, 1913 : Death of Spencer Lyttelton, one of my oldest friends. Sickening. What a year this has been : Lord Wolseley, G. Wyndham, Alfred Lyttelton, Emily Lawless.

“ How the world is changing for me ! I cannot bear to look forward. As we go on in life, it is really walking through grave-yards . . . ”

Her obituary notices end with one on the death of Cæsar, King Edward VII's dog, and she received the following letter from Miss Knollys in answer to hers to Queen Alexandra :

“ Marlborough House.

“ April 22, 1914.

“ MY DEAR LADY BATTERSEA,

“ The Queen thanks you very much for all your kind sympathy about poor Cæsar—his death has been a great sorrow to Her Majesty, as she always looked upon him as the last living link with the beloved King.

“ I am thankful to say that the Queen is well again at last, and I hope you are the same, though you do not mention your health.

“ Yours affectionately,

“ CHARLOTTE KNOLLYS.”

CHAPTER XIV

1914-1918

The Great War

So much has been written about the years between 1914 and 1918 that anything fresh is hardly to be expected. Still, a new generation has arisen, and to them it may be interesting to read how the daily life went on at the outbreak of war, mingled, as it was, with alarms, rumours and tragedies. Lady Battersea and Mrs. Yorke at once thought of service, and Mrs. Yorke was almost like an extra official at Netley Hospital, the grounds of which adjoined her garden. She had a free pass and could go into the hospital at all hours, and she trotted up and down the wards, laden with gifts of fruit or of books for men and officers ; while the latter made free use of her garden. She seemed to be unmoved by fear of the Zeppelins, and went about her avocations, up to London and to meetings, as usual.

She was known to all the Hampshire people, and I remember her coming home very pleased, saying : " More people know Tom Fool than Tom Fool knows." Something had gone wrong with her car, two miles from Southampton, and the chauffeur left it to walk into the town for help. And, " Oh, Annie ! There you were, left sitting all alone in the car, with your pearls on ! " ejaculated her sister. " Why not ? " said Mrs. Yorke. Presently, a lorry

came up and stopped, and the driver got down and said : " You be Mrs. Yorke, ben't you ? " On Mrs. Yorke's reply : " Yes, I be," he offered to tow her car into Southampton.

Lady Battersea at once set to work, housing Belgians, establishing a tiny hospital, and, some time later on, turning the reading-room into a canteen. The Zeppelins chased *her* away to Aston Clinton. Here part of the house was already occupied by the Staff of the Twenty-first Division, and with her usual zest she made friends with the officers.

She was far more apprehensive than her sister, to whom she writes :

" Fancy your being warned to go home by a shop-woman and your not following such advice. Should I not have flown ? "

Yet, apart from her fears and her sorrow for the killed and wounded, she derived much enjoyment from the new kind of human element with which she was brought into contact. In fact, Lord Rosebery teasingly writes to her :

" I see that you cannot tear yourself from your barracks. *Oh ! que j'aime les militaires !* "

In August 1914 Lady Battersea reviews the happenings of the previous weeks :

" The war clouds have been menacing for some weeks, now they have broken, and to-day, August 5th¹ war is declared.

" War between England, with France and Russia, against Germany, Austria, Italy.

" The assassination of the Austrian Hereditary Prince and Princess in Servia set the match to the fire. The conflagration spread all over Europe. We are holding the

¹ The news of its declaration (on August 4th) could only have reached her on this day.

North Sea with our fleet. If that were to go, we should be overwhelmed.

"I had a most anxious time concerning Annie, about her movements, no news from her for some days. Thank Heaven! she is now at Bergen and I hope will not attempt to move in one of the big passenger boats, which may be taken.

"Lord Morley and J. Burns have resigned. Edward Grey is doing well, Redmond made a very fine speech. For the present, the Irish peril is at an end. Both North and South combine to come to our aid. A generous people! We hope that Lord Kitchener will be given command of the Army, at all events of the organization. . . . The Red Cross practices to start at once.

"In the house are: Gerald Balfour,¹ Sir Lawrence Jones, Winnie Flower.² Bertie³ has joined the Territorials. Nevill⁴ is with the Norfolk Yeomanry. Dolly⁵ has left me."

From Bergen Mrs. Yorke describes her adventures to her sister:

"'Garland', R.S.Y.C. Bergen.

"The 4th August. 1914.

"You will have received telegraphic accounts of our movements, and will have heard *now* of our incapacity to move! Here we are, and must await our turn to have some sort of accommodation on board one of the Steamers, which, fortunately, leave this port every day. We have made enquiries at the Shipping office and find that there will very likely be no places on any steamer till Monday next, but we shall know more to-morrow. What a predicament!

"We did not learn the actual state of things till we arrived yesterday morning at Havanger! There is a difficulty also in obtaining money at the banks, but I have written both to my bankers and to Alfred, asking them to telegraph to the Bergen Banks to give me credit!

¹ A frequent guest, whose visits she always enjoyed.

² Mrs. Herbert Flower.

³ Her nephew, Mr. Herbert Flower.

⁴ Another nephew.

⁵ Her niece.

"Well, although this is a most unprecedented and unexpected dilemma, one must not think of any little discomfort one may have in the face of the awful tragedy of a European war! It is almost unthinkable. One cannot help wondering, where is the use of diplomacy, of arbitration, of that worn-out sentence, the 'resources of civilization,' if war is to be the only arbitrator!

"Oh! What a contrast to our visit to Bergen three years ago, when the German Fleet was filling the harbour. Do you remember? . . ."

Lady Battersea continues her journal:

"AUGUST 7th, 1914: Yesterday to Norwich to attend a Red Cross meeting. Awaiting orders from War Office. Kitchener Secretary of War. Thank God. Italy insists on remaining neutral. . . .

"August 13th: Have spent an anxious week.

"Dear Annie returned on the 8th from Bergen. Not seen her as yet.

"Weather glorious and summer-like; *peace* here—but across the sea, carnage and bloodshed. Hatred *let loose*. Splendid behaviour of the Belgians. Cruelty of the Germans.

"Alone in the house with Winnie, dear little woman.

"The Hospital beautifully organized. Red Cross practices very successful. Working party much approved of. . . .

"AUGUST 22nd: Day of Intercession. Six o'clock service well done by Bishop of Willesden. Impressive, pathetic. Brussels entered by the Germans. Antwerp in a state of siege."

The next extract is from a letter to her sister:

"The Pleasaunce, Overstrand, Norfolk.

"September 9th.

"... I do congratulate you upon the return of the 'Garland.' How glad the men must be to find themselves in home waters again. Very *clever* to have taken a westerly course—safer than the East and North routes, which are so fiendishly mined.

"My Belgians are happily established in No. 6 [one

of her houses]. They had not slept at all for more than ten nights, on account of the awful cannonading and fear of zeppelins. . . . They came to tea yesterday in the Cloisters, where I entertained a party of Overstrand mothers, and these applauded when they saw them and called out : ' Welcome to our land ! '

" I gave the women a short account of the cause of the War, and explained the map to them. I also told them that I had had the honour of entertaining Field Marshal Sir J. French last year. They listened most attentively, and I think of doing the same kind of thing once a fortnight. I stuffed in a little Temperance teaching, which they all took very well. . . .

" I think Claude's idea of writing a brief and easy account of the origins of the War excellent. I had some idea of doing this myself for the people here. Most strange we should both have thought of this !

" I hope and trust that we are doing well abroad. Last night's news were better. *If only* the Russians could get quickly to Berlin ! . . . "

Her pleasant little courtesies were not forgotten, even in this turmoil. In other letters she writes of the former Lord Chancellor :

" . . . This morning I took a bouquet of 91 roses to Lord Halsbury [on his ninety-second birthday] with a card containing a little Hebrew verse, to which he replied in Hebrew, ' Heart to heart,' and I heard him informing his niece that he and Lady Battersea talked Hebrew together. Wonderful old man ! . . . "

" I have had a visit from the Halsburys. He is 91, and a marvel, full of fun and talk. He quoted *Hebrew* to me in an extraordinary manner and corrected me once when I made a little Hebrew quotation. . . . "

In her journal she continues :

" SEPTEMBER 30th, 1914 : Yom Kippur [Day of Atone-ment] again. How quickly the years go by. . . .

" Recruiting in England truly wonderful and Russia

marching into Hungary and Austria and threatening *East Prussia*. No patients in my Hospital, nor any likely to come, but a family of Belgian refugees in Number 6. . . .

" Home Rule Bill on the Statute Book. Great disgust evinced by Carson and Bonar Law, but splendid and dramatic scene in the House of Commons! Hope and pray that Covenanters and Nationalists will fight side by side.

" As soon as I arrived at Aston Clinton, had visit from the General [and], Major Lee. Intimations from Mr B that they expected loan of the house. Offered the house to the General. Accepted with great pleasure and gratitude. " NOVEMBER 19th: Returned to Aston Clinton after an absence of six weeks. Some fear of bombardment or raid. I took all my most valuable pictures and plate—grieved at leaving. Have had an interesting and most busy time.

" Hospital full—ten Belgians, seven English, four at Lady Speyers'.

" The Belgians are simple and pleasant like children, rather vain and conceited about their appearance. Bathroom outside for them—made the place as comfortable as possible.

" On the King's fête day, they all insisted upon going to Church. It poured with rain, but go they would and they did. They all seemed to enjoy the Service. Winnie is splendid. She works with a will and makes a first rate nurse . . . I have spent hours in the Hospital. . . .

" Hamble Cliff.

" DECEMBER 16th: Bombardment of Yorkshire coast, Scarborough, Whitby and Hartlepool—abominable."

" DECEMBER 23rd: Annie out a great deal, very busy."

" JANUARY 19th, 1915: Zeppelins over Cromer and Sheringham! Not a pleasant piece of news."

Two days later she writes to her sister from London:

" The snow is falling rapidly and it is very cold. I hope, if there are Zeppelins about, that the airmen may be blinded

and frozen, but I cannot think that they will attempt the passage to-day! It is an *unpleasant prospect*, however, that they will come!

"The Subway is ready for us, however I should prefer the still-room or kitchen, because the temperature there would not be below zero. I always wear my pearls (as I do not want to lose them in a *débauche*) and at night have a fur cloak at the foot of my bed, a shawl and warm slippers, and next to me, candles and matches. . . ."

Lord Rosebery writes to her :

"Rosebery, Gorebridge, Midlothian.

"Feb. 6. 1915.

"MY DEAR CONNIE,

"I was delighted to get your letter, for I was meaning to write and express the hope that you were not cowering under Zeppelins at Cromer.

"I hope to be in London next week for good (or evil). But it is your turn to eat with me. . . .

"Your affectionate,

"A.R."

In her letter to Mrs. Yorke Lady Battersea continues :

"Countess von Arnim, Author of *Elizabeth and her German Garden* lunched here, rather a pathetic little figure. She hates Germany, and the Germans, yet she bears a German name and her two daughters (who are in Germany; one in a school in Marburg and one nursing in a hospital) are frantically *German*. Her money is also in a *Berlin Bank* and she cannot touch it, so that she is in rather a poor way. . . ."

Continuing her journal Lady Battersea writes :

"JANUARY 20th, 1915: Heard of the death of my dear old friend, Sir Samuel Hoare.¹ He had a great and distinct personality and Norfolk will feel his loss. . . ."

"MARCH 31st: The death of Natty² created an upheaval in the family. He had been ill for some time. . . .

¹ The father of the present Secretary of State for India.

² Lord Rothschild.

"A great and terrible shock to us all. Funeral on Friday, April 2nd. . . ."

"APRIL 19th: Memorial service at the Great Synagogue."

"AUGUST 10th: The Staff—General Forestier Walker and officers—all left early in the morning and, after ten months of constant occupation, this house was suddenly empty. I motored . . . to a point in Great Missenden, where we turned the car and watched the Twenty-First Division marching past. Men on foot, swinging along at a splendid pace, officers on horseback, ambulance cars, stretcher-bearers, kitchens, all complete. Met some of the Staff. Sickening, saying goodbye to friends; shall I ever see them again? General last of all, in a closed car. Home dreadfully sad. . . ."

She writes to her sister from Aston Clinton :

"August 18th. [1915.]

" . . . The march to the new Camp has been successfully but slowly performed, and the Royal Inspection was quite satisfactory. The King was *greatly amused* to see that two of the men carried kittens on their knapsacks, tiny creatures that never attempted to jump off, and one man had a *monkey* on his back, that put its arms round his shoulders. . . ."

"SEPTEMBER 18th: DAY OF ATONEMENT. I did not fast, but in my spirit I atoned and longed for more spiritual help. A great deadness of soul seems at times to come over me with much depression. The terrible war news hangs like a black and ever blacker cloud over us. The fact that so many are giving up their lives for us, that our country is in deadly peril, that we do not all seem to realize that peril, strikes terror into my heart. Perhaps I do not work enough, but I am getting old and work is more difficult for me than it used to be.

"I have had a happy time at Aston Clinton and have been deeply interested in the Camp and all that belongs to it. The military life has quite possessed me and I have made real friends with two or three of the officers, nice, good men. .

"Now I am here, with dear Annie at Hamble Cliff. How she works, from morning until night, never sparing herself. She is *wonderful*."

Lord Rosebery writes to tell of a visit to Overstrand during her absence :

"Sept. 19, 1915.

"38 Berkeley Square, W.

"DEAR CONSTANCE,

"On Friday after shooting, and greatly daring, I drove to . . . Overstrand. . . . Here by anxious inquiry, we found your dominions, but where they began or where they ended I could never ascertain ; they seemed as illimitable as they were gorgeous.

"Here was a lawn tennis party, there a cricket ground. I wandered timidly through a subway, came on a cloister and an azure bath and exclaimed ' I can trespass no more ; I must wait until my beloved and military cousin is here to shew me her realm herself. May she forgive me for my intrusion ! ' It is really a choice and lovely ' pleasance.' May Zeppelins respect it and my cousin condescend to shew it some day to that deplorable civilian who is her

"Affectionate.

"A.R."

To return to the journal :

"SEPTEMBER 25th : Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson—my new friend—spent Sunday with us—most agreeable."

"OCTOBER 3rd : Bulgaria joining in the war, allied with Germany—wretches. . . ."

"OCTOBER 13th : . . . Zeppelin raid. Heard the noise ; saw our aeroplanes in the sky like moving stars—also the tail of a Zepp. But no cause for fear."

"OCTOBER 14th, 1915 : Great extravagance, bought a fur coat. . . ."

"OCTOBER 21st : Medical Inspector passed Hospital."

On this day she wrote to Mrs. Yorke :

" . . . Getting settled and settling the Hospital which, *though small*, means thought and labour expended upon

it. . . . People's feelings and pockets have to be considered in war as in peace time, and I was determined to have everything ship-shape at once. . . . I am determined to make it all work as well as I can. . . ."

And in another letter she writes :

" . . . We thought that Lord Milner spoke well and to the point, also Lord Morley. Frances¹ had had some private conversations with him ; he was furious with Lord Crewe for wishing to delegate the peers to the gallery in the House of Commons, there to listen to the questions discussed. I said : ' Then we have really only *one* Chamber.' F.B. said : ' He spoke in the Lords, with such vigour and determination. They all think that Asquith is simply *played* out, not a bit up to the situation ! And, as Mr. Prothero² says, it is a simply awful one, the worst we have ever been in. I think there is a rising tide of anger against the Government. If Mr A. were to resign there is only one man to take his place, *Lloyd George*.' This has been said to me, ' for he alone grasps the situation ' . . ."

On December 22nd she writes in the same vein :

" . . . I read Lloyd George's speech with the greatest interest. What a wonderful performance, but how alarming the note of ' too late ' at the end !

" I felt sure that the audience was thrilled to a man ! ' Too late, too late, you cannot enter now ! ' I thought of that line. And indeed, if we should be too late—Well, we must not contemplate such a catastrophe !!

" I thought there was a note of alarm throughout, and Mr Runciman last night was not very reassuring.

" Oh dear, we want a very different P.M. I have no confidence in him any more, have you ? . . ."

" DECEMBER 1915 : Christmas week passed off well. . . . Gave the meat away on the 22nd. No puddings or mince pies. . . . Hospital well filled all the time. . . ."

" JANUARY 13th, 1916 : Heard of the passing away of my dear old friend [Lady Elizabeth Biddulph]. It came, not as a shock, but as a real sorrow. . . .

¹ Lady F. Balfour.

² The Editor of the *Quarterly Review*.

"I felt that I had to do something. I could not sit down and merely write letters of condolence. So I put a little notice together and sent it up to Bernard Mallet [Lady Elizabeth's son-in-law]. It was not very good, but it took me some time to write."

"I visit the Hospital daily, and the School from time to time, but I have to give up the Prisons for the time being, also the Jewish Association of Preventive and Rescue Work.

"I am beginning to feel the toll of years, and cannot attempt to do what I used to think nothing of. . . ."

"MARCH 13th: Thought I heard a zeppelin—full of nervous forebodings—motored to Sheringham, the road we shall have to take for our flight. Doubt very much the possibility of a satisfactory flight."

She writes of her fears to her sister :

"... This is indeed a time of *terror* and tribulation ; one thinks that one hears Zepps. at all hours of the evening and night, and there are constant explosions and gun-firing out at sea.

"I said good-bye to my dear little bugler [one of the patients in her hospital] this morning. He went off to Birkenhead and played 'the Last Post' for himself at the *station*, exhibiting my photograph to the porters. . . ."

On April 6th, 1916, she

"closed Hospital with regret. It has been open for four months, and has done *excellent* work. No hitch anywhere."

"APRIL 13th: . . . A very pleasant fortnight with dear Annie. I enjoyed it quietly, only unfortunately I am not strong enough to lead her very active and full life. . . ."

"FRIDAY, APRIL 28th: Came to London. Meanwhile a rebellion of the Sinn Fein had broken out in Ireland. A German submarine, laden with guns and ammunitions, had been seized on the Kerry coast. Sir Roger Casement in charge ; taken prisoner and brought to the Tower. Rising of the Sinn Feins in Dublin, a serious rebellion.

Ireland placed under martial law. Sir John Maxwell with twenty thousand troops sent to put down the rising. Mr Birrell will have to go. The Government in an unpleasant position.

"General Townshend and his army have been forced to capitulate.

"Zeppelins were over London again last Thursday.

"I believe the Germans will try an invasion next."

Her immaculate butler, Lester, used to open the door and proclaim, as though he were announcing a visitor: "The Zeppelins, my Lady."

"DECEMBER 25th. Overstrand: . . . The servants have all conformed to some necessities of this economising time. Lester has no men-servants under him. A bright, neat, pretty little parlour-maid has taken their place. I like her appearance. Otherwise no changes.

"... My Iron-room a canteen! Y.M.C.A. a great success! Cricket Pavilion much used and liked as billiard- and reading-room—Tennis pavilion used as library for the village. . . .

"In the outside world, great, extraordinary and startling changes.

"Asquith resigned his Premiership. Succeeded by Lloyd George, backed and supported by a powerful ministry. The Germans have made a bid for peace, but not one that we could accept, neither would the Allies agree to it. So I believe the fight will continue, will drag on, with a further waste of life, of money, of property and all Europe will be bankrupt. 1900 years of Christianity and of civilization have not done much to save us from the horrors of an insensate warfare.

"The year ends gloomily.

"Out of the last twelve months, I have spent *January, February, March* and ten days of *April at Overstrand*, also part of June, July, August and September at the same place, and now I am here again from December 16th. . . .

"I have tried not to neglect my duties in any of my three houses, but find it difficult always to do as I feel I ought and as I should like.

"Still visiting Prison and taking a certain interest in the Jewish Charities—not as much active interest as I wish I could.

"Manager of Schools here in Overstrand and at Aston Clinton.

"... I have resigned being on the Executive of the National Union of Women Workers. Have been elected Hon. Vice-President. Attended the meetings this year and was enormously interested. Some excellent speaking. Had no social meetings either connected with charities or otherwise. Rather losing sight of some old friends.

"See a good deal of the Flowers. Like them all. . . .

"Have made a new friend in the Bishop of Norwich,¹ a *clever, intellectual* man. . . .

"Living in cordial friendship with all my neighbours. . . ."

Mrs. Yorke writes to her sister on February 4th, 1917 :

"... The *Observer* was thrilling to-day. America has actually joined us !!! I wonder what the result will be ! The speech of the 'G.L.M.' as the *Observer* has re-christened the Premier [Mr. Lloyd George] was also very inspiring. . . .

"What do you think of the food-restrictions ? I have been discussing them with Mr Batchelor, who thinks the *meat allowance* very limited ! We are to commence this week. I fancy there will be some difficulty in large establishments and in public places like restaurants, etc., but in small (!) households like mine, the experiment will be *quite* interesting.

"Oh ! dear, what strange experiences we are having !"

Miss Alice de Rothschild writes in March 1917 of the Russian revolution and of the current rumours about Rasputin : of his eating his food with his hands, disdaining the use of his knife and fork, and after finishing his meals holding out his hands to his lady admirers to lick them clean. She

¹ Dr. Pollock.

wonders whether the Czar is still alive, and if his fate will frighten the Kaiser and the Junker party.

The journal continues in March 1917 :

"... It is indeed a strenuous time if we think of the horrible events that are going on all over the world, the battles, in the air, on the sea, under the sea, on land and under the earth. Everywhere destruction, everywhere *hatred*. The possibility of famine in our own country, or the shortage of men for the war, home industries, agriculture, trade, shipbuilding, &c., &c. Gigantic difficulties surround our statesmen. It seems almost impossible not to make mistakes, not to muddle on. Revolution in Russia on March 11th. Czar *deposed*. Imperial family shut up at Tsarskoe Selo—Germans, massing their troops against Russia, attempt to break through to Petrograd. They would release the Czar and then the revolution would indeed be one of bloodshed and terror, rivalling 1793 in France. . . ."

Lady Battersea writes :

"SATURDAY, MARCH 17th: Saw in *The Times* news of the death of my beloved friend, Adelaide Brownlow. It gave me a terrific shock. . . .

"My little notice gave great satisfaction. Had it re-printed. Gave about a hundred and fifty copies away.

"I had seen her but little of late, but always loved her."

She writes to her sister how,

"... I felt impelled to write and always remember that you approve of my obituaries, for people and *dogs*. At first I thought that I had lost the power of the pen (such power as mine had) and I was very lost, but sitting alone after dinner it seemed to return and I went on until very late and got the work performed, '*tant bien que mal*' as you will see! She was indeed a unique personality.

"Lionel [Rothschild] is convinced that we shall march upon Jerusalem, and found our protectorate there. When suggested that Zionism was at an end, on account of Russia's new and wonderful move, he said certainly not. . . ."

In her journal, Lady Battersea records :

" APRIL 29th, 1917 : The Anniversary of my birthday, age seventy-four ! When I was a child I thought that that was a *very great age*. Now, although I feel old and have lost a good deal of strength and wish to do things—power in every way—I really do not feel so very old, and I can and do still enjoy :

" My friends' company,
Social intercourse,
My books,
Writing and receiving letters,
Writing other matters,
My beloved garden,
Nature and scenery.

" That I have a very dear sister, whose company I enjoy beyond any other, and for whose affection I am deeply grateful, is one of the blessings for which I thank my Heavenly Father daily—may we be together during these last years of our earthly sojourn.

.

" MAY 29th : My dear father was born on this date in 1810.

" On this same date, 1917, my dearly loved cousin and one of my best friends, Leopold de Rothschild, ended his life on earth. I saw him six hours *after his death*. . . ."

In June 1917 Lady Battersea went to Bath for some weeks, and from there she writes anxiously to her sister :

" June 16th 1917.

" I am getting seriously alarmed about you and the probability of more raids. May I recommend *Hamble Cliff* instead of Curzon Street, which for the moment, at all events, seems a less dangerous spot. . . . I know that Lord French said London would be very *dangerous* in July.

" The accounts of the raid are sickening, as well as pathetic. I admire the fine behaviour of the school-teachers, who must have had an awful time ! I fancy

that the population of London will insist upon more warning and more protection and *reprisals* ! . . . ”

Mrs. Yorke sends a cheerful account of the strike of the Metropolitan Police :

“ Hamble Cliff, Netley, Southampton.

“ Sept. the 1st.

“ . . . We came yesterday afternoon, the train being very punctual but extremely crowded. We were 10 in our carriage, but everyone was goodnatured and anxious to accommodate his or her fellow-travellers.

“ London really looked *very* funny without the familiar forms of the dear *bobbies*, but the traffic managed itself *perfectly* and there were no *blocks* or disagreeables of any kind apparently. It rather reminded me of children *out* for a holiday, wishing to show their teachers and parents how well they could behave *without* their elders !

“ I am so glad that the strike is over and the petition granted ! . . . ”

Two days later Lady Battersea gives a lively account of a night alarm :

“ The Pleasaunce, Overstrand, Norfolk.

“ Sept. 3.

“ We have had rather a disturbed night, owing to Zepps. They began coming about 9.30, but I heard nothing until 12, when I was awakened . . . from my first slumbers.

“ The idea was that I had better descend in case we were struck, so down I went with Teddy [her dog] tucked under my arm. . . .

“ We watched the search lights playing all round us and heard occasional bombs. Hugh (my nephew) did not leave his room, and poor Gerald Balfour, suffering from cough and perhaps *'flu*, remained quietly in bed. . . .

“ We sat up until 3 o'clock. . . . ”

Lady Battersea, however, remained at Overstrand, where, on October 18th, she heard the news of a “ horrible raid in London.”

Next month, nevertheless, finds her at Aston Clinton, where, in answer to her invitation, she receives the following note from Lord Rosebery :

“ Rosebery, Gorebridge, Midlothian.

“ November 16th, 1917.

“ How nice it would be to be at Aston Clinton as a guest, but I sometimes think that I shall never again pay a visit. I am too old, too deaf, and too stupid. Besides, how should I get there from the station ? No petrol, no horses ! Is there a commodious wheelbarrow ?

“ Your affectionate,

“ A.R.”

Only two days after this was written, we find the entry in her journal :

“ NOVEMBER 18th, 1917 : A *terrible* Sunday. Heard of the death of Neil Primrose.¹ Evelyn² badly wounded.

“ NOVEMBER 19th : Death of Evelyn at Cairo.”

Mrs. Yorke writes to her on December 5th :

“ . . . There is a *sickening* account of the murder of the *whole Russian* Royal family, in to-day's *Times*. Really men have become *fiends* in these days. . . .”

“ DECEMBER 10th : Jerusalem taken by the British—*magnificent*.”

“ JANUARY 31st, 1918 : The death of my dear Alfred. He had lain unconscious for four days.”

Mr. Alfred de Rothschild, living at Halton only two miles away from Aston Clinton, unmarried and particularly devoted to his mother, was invariably willing to lend Lady Battersea help on all occasions. In many ways lavishly generous, he had some peculiarities as a valetudinarian that amused his

¹ Son of Lord Rosebery.

² Son of Mr. Leopold de Rothschild.

acquaintances. With his luxury and wealth and love of art, Lady Battersea would compare him to some of the Medici princes. Visitors to Aston Clinton would be taken over to his great white "chateau" and there, in the winter garden, Mr. Alfred would conduct his own band, or stand in a white overcoat, directing his troupe of circus ponies and dogs.

So died the last of Baron Lionel's children. All the brothers had been ready to stand by and help Constance and her sister in any of their business perplexities. They had been brought up almost as brothers and sisters. Now the House was represented by a younger generation, Mr. Leopold de Rothschild's two sons. Kind as the two younger men invariably were, there could not be the same intimacy, and the sisters had more hesitation in applying to them than they had to their father or uncles; and in her last years Constance often lamented that she had no brother or near relative to whom she could turn.

In the beginning of her journal for 1918 Lady Battersea writes :

"I began this year at Hamble Cliff in a most unpropitious way. . . . The doctor . . . appeared, looked carefully at my throat and to my horror pronounced the word, diphtheria. I was incredulous, but he returned in the afternoon with a second brother in medicine clad in khaki, who concurred in the verdict. . . . I was beautifully nursed and looked after—oh! how thankful I was not to have been in an Hotel. . . .

"I was kept extremely quiet, never put my feet down for six weeks, lay like a Mummy in my bed.

"... Dear Annie was quite angelic, for I must have been a dreadful nuisance!! . . .

"I read quantities of books whilst I was ill, but strangest of all, I felt a mad desire to write. Could not

keep quiet, as if my hand were pushed on. Scribbled verses—some good, others bad or indifferent—but always the insane and desperate feeling that I *must write*."

It was when she was at Bath, where she had already begun to feel unwell before leaving to go to Mrs. Yorke, that Lady Battersea met Mr. Frederic Harrison, with whom she commenced an active correspondence. He writes to her during her convalescence :

" 10 Royal Crescent, Bath.

" 10th February 1918.

" DEAR LADY BATTERSEA,

" How very kind it is of you to write. . . .

" I have had some correspondence with Rosebery—most kind and friendly to me, but I see with sorrow that he insists on his own poor health, and he is quite indignant that I should ask him to give us a hand in this crisis. I did ask him. There never was a time when a Burke was more needed to rouse our ruling order to the menace of Revolution. Bolshevism is in the air of Europe. In spite of its horrors and its murders, the Labourers are fired with the idea of its having overthrown a vast *régime* and social system. There is a sort of international delirium which whispers abroad! 'Overthrow your system and do it better next time!' I am amazed at the nonchalance with which the Lords and the Capitalists have handed over our ancient Constitution to ten million men and eight million women (for the six million women will soon be eight million—same age as men). And of these eighteen millions, more than half are politically simpletons, open to any demagogue. I seem to be the only pessimist—the only Conservative left in Britain. I have not changed my opinions for fifty years. But everybody else seems to have changed. And fifty years ago, I was abused as a revolutionist and a dreamer. But I must not trouble you with my dark visions.

" . . . Do read the Dean of St. Paul's in the *New Quarterly*, that Jesus never founded any Christian Church. It was Paul, as we have always insisted, who founded a

dogmatic and living *religion*, which the Dean seems to think is now obsolete.

"I hope that as soon as you are well enough to travel, you will return to Bath for a rest cure. And I wish you could persuade Rosebery to do the same and exchange the cold air and excitements of Auld Reekie for the peace, and intellectual repose and humane surroundings of Bath.

"Yours sincerely,
"FREDERIC HARRISON."

Frederic Harrison to Lady Battersea.

"10 Royal Crescent, Bath.
"9th March, 1918.

"MY DEAR LADY BATTERSEA,

"I am indeed glad to hear from you and to learn news of your convalescence—but it goes sadly slow. Do think of Bath for a *Nachkur* rather than Bucks—which is not so peaceful or so cheerful. . . .

"At last we have a decision from the inspired lips of the All Highest that Conquest is the object of war, and the Domination of Europe is the end. Surely that ought to cure Lord Lansdowne and all Pacifists of the folly of 'negotiating' with Beelzebub.

"I had a very friendly letter to-day from Fitzmaurice. I cannot think he agrees with his brother, who seems to be overcome with panic.

"Have you heard anything lately of or from Lord Rosebery? He seems to give me up as hopeless—I have not had a line since his reproof of my call to him to speak.

"The Conservative and propertied classes seem to me to shrink before the apparition of Socialism—like the Russian nobility before Trotsky. Why don't they put out a *policy*? In my next 'Obiter Scripta' I warn the Unions that they are being undermined by the Socialists, and so is the House of Commons! What will come when eighteen million ignorant and excited men and women vote for revolution?

"In April too I shall touch on the new absurd book of Benjamin Kidd—the only real point is borrowed from

Auguste Comte. All the new philosophers (like Wells) take his ideas, but do not mention him. His solution for Industry—see my *Moral and Religious Socialism*—is the only possible solution, and this is indeed the order of the three elements you state. The two Latin lines are from Virgil's *Georgics* iv about the *Bees*. 'These tremendous combats of theirs can be stopped by throwing a pinch of sand on them.' Really—the House of Lords will not be *reformed*. The people and the new Parliament will have no Second Chamber, and the Peers' House will be left like the Monarchy as a harmless, obsolete, interesting survival of the past ages. I trust the finer spring will give you fresh air and new strength.

"Yours sincerely,

"FREDERIC HARRISON."

At the end of March Lady Battersea went to Aston Clinton, where she remained until July.

"JULY 7TH, 1918: Prison Board, my last."

Two days later she returned to Overstrand, where she once more became immersed in her many activities and visitors. Mrs. Yorke writes to her:

"... Alas, alas! The horrors do not cease—but—the news of the retreat *is* cheering! Oh! oh! may they have to retreat and *realize* their defeat! How delightful it would be if one could see the end of the war! ..."

"October 22nd.

"What a wonderful day yesterday was. Really it required a Shakespeare to describe that extraordinary scene of the horrible humiliation of the German Fleet! How splendidly and with what dignity our Admiral and Officers disported themselves!

"I wonder if the Kaiser is really hatching some new plot, though how he can succeed without a navy or sufficient food for an army, is difficult to conceive! ..."

"I wonder who is going to stand for your part of Norfolk and whom you will vote for? ..."

Lady Battersea writes to her on November 7th:

" November 7th, 1918.

" I feel quite giddy when I read the morning papers with all the wonderful news. Everything topsy-turvy ; a gigantic cataclysm, rather a kind of ' Alice in Wonderland ' or ' Through the Looking Glass ' effect.

" I seem to be always seeing Emperors and Kings and their Consorts running, and their thrones toppling over. Is it not wonderful !!!

" But I do wish that the horrid fighting would come to an end ! Every day brings its sad list of casualties, and surely when the end is near and the result of the war conclusive, there should be a cessation of hostilities.

" . . . I wonder what will happen to the Rothschild Banking House in Vienna. It must be a gigantic change for our cousins, and I should think somewhat disastrous from a financial point of view. . . ."

And Mrs. Yorke, writing on November 10th, expresses much the same feelings :

" I hardly know how I can write. I feel as if I were suddenly transposed to some new planet. The events of the last few days hardly seem to belong to this world, they are so surprising !

" What a fearfully humiliating time for the Kaiser, and what a terrible retribution for the systematic lying, which has naturally roused the wrath and indignation of the population.

" I wonder what has happened to Frankfort and to the various family domains ! . . .

" I thought the Prime Minister's speech *very* fine. It was really worthy of the unique and wonderful occasion ! Oh, what shall we hear to-morrow ? . . ."

Lady Battersea writes in her journal of what they heard :

" MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11th, 1918: What a day ! Arrival of the papers full of hope. Armistice to be signed that morning. At 11.15 came the joyful intelligence . . . Armistice signed. Oh ! What a day— We had a little school meeting of managers, but how could anyone attend to such a small parochial matter when

thrones were tottering and rulers abdicating. . . . Everything seemed transfigured, we could hardly know where we were. People in and out all day. Up went my flag and my window was adorned. *Peace* after four years and a half. After the slaughter of twenty million human-beings, after the destruction of beautiful cities, churches, libraries, homes. After the most inhuman, monstrous, abominable deeds. Peace at last ! Almost impossible to believe this to be true, and yet it was !

" We had a fine thanksgiving service in the evening in this church, which I greatly enjoyed. Thank God, yes, thank God for his goodness, over and over again. A splendid victory for the Allies."

To her sister she writes :

" November 11th, 1918.

" . . . My flag has been run up where it has not been seen for four years or more—another flag is fluttering from the Tower, and my sitting room is sporting all manner of flags, even the Red Cross. Hurrah !!

" . . . The Band turned out as soon as the news was ascertained. I heard them playing triumphant airs whilst the people were cheering. Think of all England in this condition, and France and Italy !

" I hope it will be a bloodless revolution in Germany ! How will it all end ? The Kaiser ought to have courted death at the head of his Army, not to have absconded. How must he feel after ruining his country and causing 20,000,000 of casualties ! . . ."

" November 13th, 1918.

" . . . It is so difficult to do anything during these days of excitement. I feel simply worn out. Is it not strange, that sensation of a strain being *suddenly lifted* off one's brain !

" So wonderful ; I am sure your part of the world must have been glowing with excitement. Even here we all felt the intoxication of victory and restoration of peace. . . . Did you read Clémenceau's speech ? Really very fine :

" " The heroes who are gone, soldiers of God : the heroes

of to-day, soldiers of Humanity—all, soldiers of Ideals.' A very grand idea, well expressed.

"I got a charming reply from Queen Alexandra (to whom I had telegraphed):

" 'A thousand thanks for congratulations for our splendid triumph and end of this terrible war

" 'ALEXANDRA.'

"I thought she would like to be remembered in this general rejoicing.

"... The fate of the Crown Prince was dramatic, and well deserved—a case of poetical justice. But where will the Kaiser be allowed to live? And how must he feel....

"What a splendid reception the King and Queen have had throughout London. I liked Lloyd George's short speech immensely, and then the walk into St. Margaret's—most beautiful, *touching* and *impressive*!"

"November 15th.

"... I thought... on the great day... of dear Queen A. and Princess Louise, and I think they liked my telegram. I always feel for people who are rather out of things, like our dear Queen of old days, do not you? I wish there were not that revolutionary element in this country, and it will be curious to see what the coming election will show in results! I do hope that the women will vote for *order*.

"I feel sure that the Kaiser and his son meditate returning some day to their vacant if lost thrones! Like Napoleon I. Shall we have another Waterloo?

"How dramatic will be the arrival of *Wilson* and *Botha*...."

"DECEMBER 14th, 1918: Election day all over England. VOTED!!!"

CHAPTER XV

1919-1931

The Last Years

THE exaltation of Armistice week did not last long, and Lady Battersea begins her journal for 1919 in a more subdued frame of mind :

“ The War has come to an end, but the first months of the year have not been very bright. What changes in old accustomed things. . . . Olive Carr¹ has been so good to me, calling nearly daily. My visits have been, when I have been out, to see dear Lester.² What terrible losses there have been of late. John Flower³ January 31st, Lester, Agneta Montagu,⁴ George Russell (March 17th).

“ To me the loss of [Lester] is irreparable, he was such a splendid servant and a most excellent man. He gave such a good tone to the house. . . . The house will never be the same without him. He was a reader, and a devoted churchman. He was a peace-maker and might have been a model to many men better educated than he was. Alas ! Alas ! ”

(It is true that she never had anyone who in any way replaced him, and she felt increasingly the burden of a large household.)

She continues :

¹ The Rector of Overstrand's wife, who from now on was a constant visitor.

² Her butler.

³ Her nephew.

⁴ Mrs. Yorke's sister-in-law.

"G. W. E. Russell—a dear old friend, one whom I really loved—what interests we had in common, what books we both liked, what friends we both appreciated. How we had written together, how much he had helped me with compositions, speeches, &c., how I relied upon his literary judgment. How fond he had been of my darling, blessed Mother. Ahime !"

During the latter part of the War, Lady Battersea had amused herself in her solitary evenings with writing her *Reminiscences*. There are a good many references to these in her letters. Mr. George Russell had been one of her great stand-bys, and she missed his help very much. She describes to Mrs. Yorke how she set about the work :

"... the precious Memoirs ... have been written, re-written two or three times, criticized by Georgione,¹ slightly corrected, *re-written again* and finally typed. Voila !"

"... This is how I worked : first of all, I asked for the list of visitors we had at Aston Clinton on those two memorable occasions. Then I used a few, very few, notes I had made from old diaries ; my conversations I remembered literally. I fixed the date of one of our visits to Hawarden by recalling that Mr Gladstone had read the last chapter of Ecclesiastes on the Sunday ; and I discovered by looking at the Churchman's Calendar that it must have been the last Sunday in November. From an old diary of Cyril's I was able to substantiate this. I am fortunately able to trust to my memory for many things, and I have become quite an adept in poking about in old memoirs, and books of reference for just a sentence or two which may be of value. I have had *four to five* hours in the day of quiet and leisure to pursue the work, so am getting on. . . ."

The chapters were sent not only to Mrs. Yorke, but to the various friends whose names occurred in

¹ George Russell.

them or whose criticisms she valued. I quote two letters from Lord Rosebery concerning them :

" JULY 26th, 1918.

" Mentmore, Leighton Buzzard.

" MY DEAR CONNIE,

" You are very tempting, and if I went anywhere I should like to go to you and prowl about your delightful pleasaunce. But I am gey ill to move, in fact immovable, and not fit to pay visits, for I scarce know which is the feeblest, my brains or my legs. . . .

" Persevere with the Memoirs. They will be voluminous, like St. Simon's, and delightful, like St. Simon's.

" Your affectionate,

" A.R."

" Mentmore, Leighton Buzzard.

" July 16th, 1920.

" MY DEAR CONSTANCE,

" I return the Memoirs. I have read them with great interest, as they contain such intimate touches of Disraeli and Gladstone, more especially Mr Gladstone's discourse on the immortality of the soul. But your fly-leaves were a dreadful nuisance. They whitened the floor at last, as with one hand one cannot deal with so froward a manuscript.

" Your Affy.

" A.R."

Hitherto she had regarded her writing more as a pastime than as a serious undertaking ; when, however, she thought of publication Lord Rosebery was not encouraging :

" The Durdans, Epsom.

" Dec. 20th, 1920.

" MY DEAR CONSTANCE,

" It was a great delight to receive your letter this morning. I really thought that you had forgotten me. I wish I had your facile pen : but I have no pen of any kind, or any news. A week ago I had a bad fall which kept me in great pain for some days ; but this is not exhilarating news. I suppose in one's old age one tumbles about like

a teetotum, and hunting men rather enjoy these accidents, which add to the zest of the chase. But then I never was a hunting man.

"Now as to the Memoirs, from which I have been shut out for a long time. I strongly advise against printing them, however few the copies; for somebody dies to whom a copy has been given and his books are sold, and the book then becomes public. I knew very well when you began writing them that you would rather wish to print them for your friends; but I think it is most dangerous, and comes to much the same as publication. If one writes for a privately printed book one writes more openly than if one were writing for real publication. Though it comes to much the same in the end. I suppose you will print them all the same, but I trust, as they say in the House of Lords, that my protest will be recorded.

"I suppose you have been in Connaught¹ (as poor Randolph used to call it when he lived there), and now are experiencing the balmy breezes of Cromer. It makes me shudder to think of them. Do the Suffields ever come there now?

"... I have been writing to a friend to remonstrate on his subscribing to the repair of the Cathedral at Rheims. That no doubt is a worthy subject, but charity begins at home. With Westminster crumbling, and York tumbling, and St. Paul's in jeopardy, and St. George's Chapel ruinous, there are worthier objects for an Englishman than even the Cathedral at Rheims.

"And now I must not drivel any longer, or you will want to print my letter privately as a volume.

"Yours affectionately,
"A.R."

It was not, however, until 1922 that the book was ready for the press.

Lady Battersea spent the summer of 1919 at Aston Clinton, and exclaims at the "horrible sight of the Halton woods being destroyed.

During the War Mr. Alfred de Rothschild had

¹ Connaught Place, where Lord Randolph lived at one time.

given to the nation his famous beech woods above Halton, which by 1919 had become the headquarters of the Royal Flying Corps.

The following year she writes of the loss of

"Adeline Bedford—April 14th, 1920. I heard the news of her death at a wedding party. . . . It gave me the most terrible shock.

"I saw her after death, looking so beautiful and at peace. Had a long *talk* with Isabel.¹ Came home and wrote a little notice for the *Westminster Gazette*—rather successful—about her Prison Work. Dear Adeline ! . . ."

She begins the year 1921 with the entry :

"JANUARY: *Delightful* starting the year with dear Dolly and my Vescovo."²

"JANUARY 5th: Gave a delightful, rollicking children's Party.³ Bishop left in the morning."

"MARCH 12th: Deeply moved and grieved at the death of *Isabel Somerset*."⁴

"MARCH 21st: Death of another dear old friend, Sir Algernon West."

"JUNE 17th: Princess Louise dined; consulted her concerning *Memoirs*. . . ."

"FEBRUARY 1922: Lucy Cohen paid me a nice long visit. Enjoyed very much having her with me.

"Worked hard at *Memoirs*; put finishing touches."

It was with the greatest difficulty that, before I left, I made her promise that her book should be sent off to Sir Frederick Macmillan without any further alterations.

"APRIL 26th: *Sybil Grant*.⁵ She brings a bright and delicious atmosphere with her."

¹ Lady Henry Somerset.

² The Bishop of Norwich, who, for the rest of her life, was a frequent visitor and correspondent.

³ This became an annual event.

⁴ Sister of the Duchess of Bedford.

⁵ Daughter of Lord Rosebery.

Lady Sybil Grant was staying at the Guest House, as on April 29th Lady Battersea writes :

" APRIL 29th : My seventy-ninth birthday. I actually dined at the Guest House. Very delightful. . . ."

" MAY 3RD : Annie and Thesie¹ brought me the sad but not unexpected news of dear Alice's death. The news seemed to possess me ; I could think of nothing else. It appeared so impossible. . . ."

Waddesdon, which on the death of Baron Ferdinand had gone to his sister, was left to Mr. James de Rothschild, a younger French cousin, now naturalized and a Member of Parliament.

" NOVEMBER 21st : Day of great excitement. Book appeared. Wonderful reception. Splendid reviews in the best papers. Could not be better. Shall never forget the sensation as long as I live of seeing myself in a long column in *The Times*. Went up to the station. Got *Daily Telegraph* and *Morning Post*.

" Letters kept on pouring in, and each day there were more reviews and more excitement.

" Even Rosebery confessed he had been wrong and came round.

" He wrote me a charming letter. Letters from Queen Alexandra and Queen Mary's Lady-in-Waiting."

Mr. Augustine Birrell gives his praise of her book in the following characteristic fashion :

" 70 Elm Park Road, Chelsea, S.W.

" MY DEAR LADY BATTERSEA,

" How kind of you to send me your book ! ' We Authors ' cannot be too civil to one another.

" The *title* is lovely, and looks well in print ! I am quite proud of it. I have read *most*, though not all, the contents—for my sister has carried it off for a day or two—but I have read enough to like it very much.

" It has but one *fault*—there is too little *acid*. As a child I always loved *Acid drops*, and as an old man I have not lost the *taste*. But I expect I am wrong, for had you

¹ Her cousin.

instilled a little of my favourite *flavour*, it would have spoiled the *dish*—and I can easily find *Acid* elsewhere than in Overstrand.”

In contrast to the above letter, Lord Rosebery writes :

“ I have read all the 454 pages of your book, each one of which is instinct with affection and sympathy ; so that the book embodies yourself, and I cannot doubt that it will be widely appreciated. . . .”

The success of her book served to bring Lady Battersea more into contact with the world again, and she enjoyed belonging to the “ company of authors ” and exchanging letters with them on their works.

“ JANUARY 1ST, 1923 : My book is selling wonderfully. Second impression going well. Dear Mother would have been delighted—Cyril less so. He never encouraged me to write, and thought very little of my literary capacities.”

“ SEPTEMBER 11TH : Have not written a line in this book for months. And yet, it has been a momentous year—very trying and horribly upsetting for both of us !

“ Spent the month of May at Aston Clinton. A sad time, after the first week when I entertained the Bishop of Norwich.

“ On June 27th, a delightful dinner at Macmillans. Third impression of book going well.

“ On July 11th, left *Aston Clinton*, I think for ever.¹ Even if I do go down to see the village, I shall not go near the house. Annie is really and truly miserable, more so than I am. But it is a wrench, no use in pretending that it is not. . . .”

“ SEPTEMBER 22ND : Great sorrow—death of John Morley. Felt it deeply. Great and good man.”

Her diaries become increasingly filled with regrets for old friends who pass away, most of which I omit.

¹ The house is now a private hotel.

" OCTOBER 25th: Bright, beautiful day.

" Royal visit—Bishop my only other guest. Arranged everything beforehand, but regret that there was no tree planting.

" 12.30. Arrival to the minute. I stood outside to receive them: Queen Mary, Princess Mary and Lady Cynthia Colville.

" The Queen in *very good* looks and most gracious. Well dressed; Princess Mary kind and simple—no side on.

" *The Queen*: 'What shall we see first, the garden or the house?'

" A lovely day, so see the garden! Naylor outside awaiting us. I race about most actively.

" 1.15. Good luncheon. No wine, *cigarettes*. Went into the drawing-room—then walked all over the house, showed off everything. Queen asked innumerable questions. Delighted with the little gold bureau—from King Charles to *Her Majesty*."

(The tiny gold cabinet to which Lady Battersea refers had been a gift from Mr. Alfred de Rothschild, and was given to Queen Mary by the sisters.)

" Connie's¹ three little boys came and were introduced to the Queen, who was very nice with them and fed them with our pink coffee sugar.

" Out again in the garden until I nearly dropped. I was so tired. Bishop of Norwich splendid. He ran about when I failed. Only grieved at not having made a suggestion for Her Majesty to have got out and seen the Church. It would have so pleased the people. . . .

" 3.40. Royal party left—quite a success."

At the end of the year, writing to her sister, she shows that her old sociability remains. It used to be a joke among her friends that she invariably talked to her fellow-travellers.

¹ Her niece, Mrs Barclay.

“ The Pleasaunce, Overstrand.

“ December 16th, 1923.

“ DEAREST ANNIE,

“ I sent you a wire yesterday to tell you of my safe arrival here—by the commonplace mode of transit. The train was very full, but quite comfortable ; two of each sex were our *compagnons de voyage*.

“ One rather pretty lady, swathed in expensive furs. She got into conversation with me and told me much of her family history. As she lived in South Wales we found that we had a subject in common, and we ended by exchanging visiting cards. Possibly my new friend will pay me an afternoon visit here—from Norwich—at which station we parted. Before leaving she shook hands with me and said : ‘ You do not know how happy you have made me on this journey.’ Why? and wherefore? Rather mysterious !

“ The two gentlemen were most polite ; one even gave up his seat to a lady and went to another carriage, whilst all his parcels and bundles tumbled about in a sad way, but he did not seem disturbed.

“ No. 2., an old gentleman, very *distingué* and good looking, came back to us from his tea in the restaurant car, arranged his various parcels and began to settle himself in his seat—then, suddenly got up and went out. I thought he had quite gone, so I said to Aline¹ : ‘ Where is he going to, I wonder, the old creature ? ’ Upon which he put his head back into the carriage and said : ‘ I am going to have a smoke,’ at which I nearly collapsed.

“ All this to show you that I am quite unused to travelling in company by rail !

“ The guard smiled at me and said : ‘ We do not often see you now, My Lady,’ which meant a *tip*. But Curtis and the car at Cromer station made me feel quite at home again.

“ I have only seen Mrs Carr as yet—very flourishing. She told me—amongst other things—that some American gentleman had read my book, which he found in the library on board the ‘ *Mauretania* ’ and upon arrival he

¹ Her maid.

instantly sent to a book-shop and ordered it. This was told to Mr Carr. I said I was sure that I got into the big trans-Atlantic liners' libraries owing to my relationship with you. The Captain, according to this gentleman, implied that I had been much read, but that may be bunkum. . . .

“ Ever yours,
“ CON ”

“ JANUARY 4th, 1924 : Letter from Macmillan, enclosing a cheque for £597. . . . ”

So proud was she of having earned this sum of money that she had the cheque (after it was cashed) framed and hung in her bedroom.

In the spring of this year she enjoyed having several visits from the Bishop of Norwich, finding his talk “ sympathetic and stimulating.” She had various members of the Flower family to stay, and enjoyed seeing all the children. Of Mrs. Flower and her children she writes :

“ My guests very, very nice, so easy to amuse.”

But now old age was exacting its toll from both sisters.

“ Much worried by poor, dear Annie's state of health and thinness. . . . How ill she looks, and so deaf.”

Lady Battersea herself was in bed with asthma for several weeks. However, on August 3rd, they both spent a

“ most agreeable afternoon. . . . Went . . . to Roehampton to Sybil Grant's Scout party. She looked very happy, boys likewise.”

On August 25th she gives a children's party, and on September 3rd sees Queen Alexandra at Sandringham.

“ SEPTEMBER 5th, 1924 : What a nuisance this old body is ! ”

However, she revived the next day, when General Lyttelton and "John Bailey, nice man, so pleasant and intelligent," and the Bishop stayed with her. She writes :

"Felt quite rejuvenated. Silly for an old creature of eighty-one ! Oh dear, but I have a young heart."

It is at about this time that Lord Rosebery, writing to her in a London fog, begs of her to come to Town, saying :

"We need a little sunshine here."

"OCTOBER 8th : Great day of Atonement. Read, pondered, regretted many sins of omission and commission.

"OCTOBER 22nd : Walked out in the morning and gave my vote to the Liberal candidate. Tremendous Conservative reaction. The poor Liberals nowhere.

"OCTOBER 29th : . . . Labour defeated. . . .

"OCTOBER 31st : Delighted at *change of government*—wonderful."¹

On December 31st she ends the year rather sadly :

"The last night of the year and, the last page of my book. I am feeling rather the worse for wear, unable to sit as long at the writing table as I used to do."

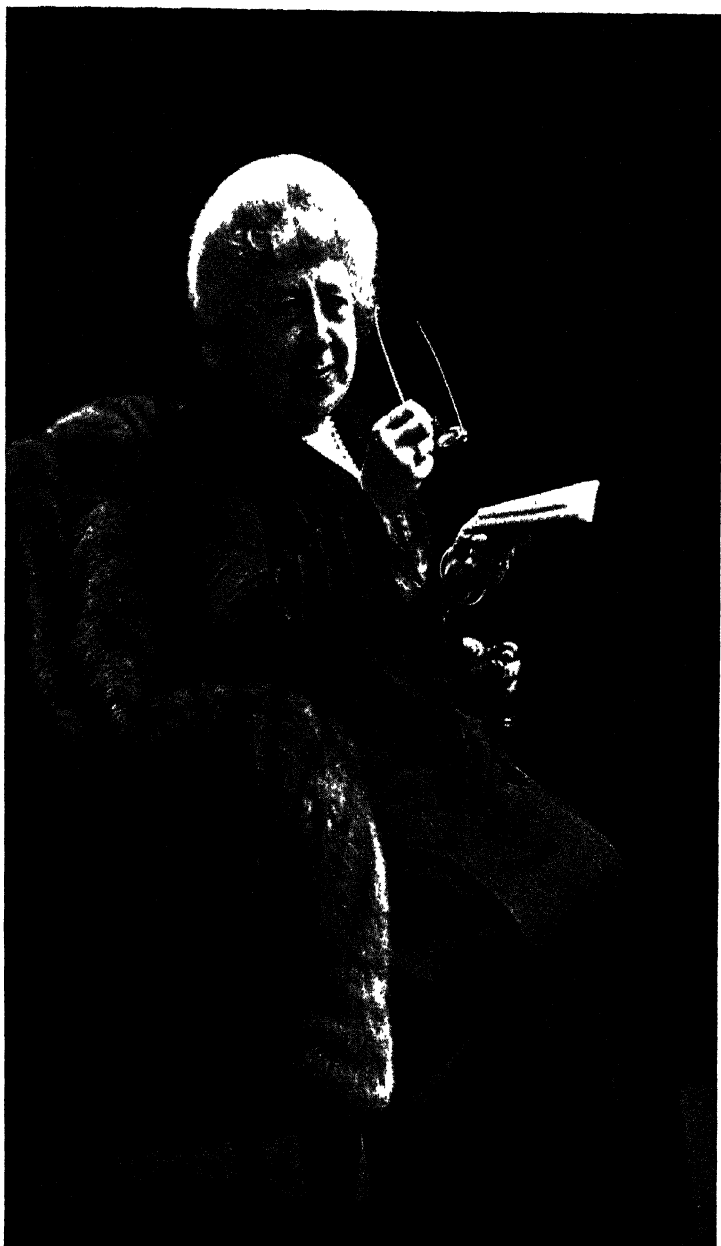
And of her sister she writes, after a visit Mrs. Yorke paid her :

"Poor dear Annie very cold and, I fear, miserable. What a ghost of her former self.

"I do not see my dear, beloved sister as much as I should like, but I know we are both happiest in our own individual homes—one in the North East, the other in the South.

"I have made a new friend in Mr Ervine, but we old ones are all getting a little too old for social pleasures and my friends of long ago are generally octogenarians. . . ."

¹ She was terrified lest the Socialists should be returned.



Olive Edis Galsworthy, F.R.P.S
LADY BATTERSEA, Circa 1923

However, on January 1st, 1925, she can still write :

"Thank God, still alive, here at Overstrand alone. At home all day."

And on January 4th :

"Read for about five hours."

She enjoyed seeing various visitors, and called on her old friend, Miss Piggott.¹

"She always excites my admiration. I think her a very wonderful woman, so receptive, so eager to learn and to educate herself."

Then comes :

"Bad night, buzzing in my head driving me wild."

Still, she takes the chair at a village meeting, and adds :

"I do not think that I made a fool of myself. I am, however, no longer fit for public work."

She had quite a lively time in London, when, among various others, she saw Lady Rothschild's granddaughters, of whom she writes :

"Three R. girls lunched with me—all nice."

Of their grandmother, Lady Rothschild, she writes :

"Dear Emmy came. She is so distinguished and nice. Quite different to the new generation, who think of nothing but games and amusements."

She even drives to Aston Clinton and sees the schools again. Another day she drives to Mentmore, but finds Lord Rosebery

"rather cross and snappy. . . . Cried down most of my friends. I think he suffers a *good deal—poor dear.*"

¹ Miss Piggott, now an invalid, was living with one servant in the old family house at Sheringham.

And then, in June, she pays her last visit to the Aylesbury prison.

“Saw one of my old friends and *two Jewesses*.”

Again she visits the Aston Clinton schools and has a “chat with the nurse” and “tea at the Rectory.” Lord Haldane dines with her, and

“Margot¹ lunches—quite jolly.”

She ends her season by

“a very nice long morning at Charcroft House.² Enjoyed speaking with the girls; they listened very intelligently. I felt that they liked hearing me. . . .”

She actually visited the Wembley Exhibition with Mrs. Yorke, and

“enjoyed it immensely. We had excellent Bath Chairs and saw everything very comfortably. . . .”

Finally :

“Paid my books—tiring and tiresome. Regret my extravagance, or seeming extravagance.”

In August she returned to Overstrand, the usual routine: visitors, her annual bazaar, for which Mrs. Yorke came up; but she becomes increasingly anxious about her sister :

“Dear Annie frightfully deaf.”

Lady Battersea herself is tired by the social life, yet she writes :

“I love seeing all the young ones! They are a happy set. . . .” But:

“Everything has become extremely *difficult* and *troublesome*. . . . Paid wages and listened to the ever recurring complaints of the household.

¹ Countess of Oxford.

² The Jewish Rescue Home.

"Weather very pleasant. Crowds in the gardens—had an interesting and touching talk with a lady—a Temperance worker. She spoke of my visit to Yarmouth, many, many years ago! I was so grateful. . . .¹

"SEPT. 1925: The least worry upsets me dreadfully.

"A good talk with the Bishop of Norwich. He helps me along wonderfully. . . ."

Lady Battersea found pleasure in the Bishop's sense of humour, and support in his knowledge of men and affairs. Her car and house were constantly put at his disposal: "The Prophet's Chamber," the palatial upstairs bedroom, was devoted to his use when he needed a rest; and many were the evenings when she would read aloud to him, or discuss theology, or regale him with tales from her store-house of memories. She would tell me in self-deprecating tones:

"I think I have broadened the Bishop's mind and taught him a great deal about Judaism."

In October, she spent "rather a tiring morning," visiting the Workhouse, of which she writes:

"... Depressing sight, but I felt ashamed of my many comforts and of my wonderful old age—I wish I could have given a grain of comfort to those dear old people."

During a visit to Hamble Cliff she writes:

"NOVEMBER 20th: Read in the paper the sad, sad news: death of our beloved Queen Alexandra. Oh! the memories that this awakened."

The year closes with:

"I have seen a *good many* old friends this year, and have made one or two new acquaintances. People are still very kind about coming to see me, and I have not

¹ On the Sundays on which the grounds were open it was a great amusement to her to watch the visitors, and sometimes to go among them, listening to their remarks, especially when they were not aware who she was.

yet been shunted, as so many women of my age are ! There is plenty of work to do here for anyone caring to exert herself, but I feel unequal to much active work any longer, and to fixing dates and hours that I might have to throw over."

It is sad to find her writing in 1926 :

" APRIL 29th : My eighty-third birthday.

" I am going down hill in many ways. My hearing failing, alas ! Tiresome attacks of asthma, bad nights, not up to my usual condition of work. Very often incapacitated, obliged to remain at home. Cannot keep my engagements. It is all so tiresome, and in the end I shall be a useless, helpless, old female."

But her work was not yet done.

On Mrs. Yorke's eighty-first birthday, Lady Battersea sent her the following lines :

" Though old in body, young in heart,
In spirit may *we* never part.
Although the years grow somewhat weighty—
We have both passed the age of eighty !—
We feel as one, and linked as ever,
Each one each other's dearest treasure,
So let me send you, sister mine,
Best wishes for this day of thine."

We have seen her growing anxiety about Mrs. Yorke, and her fears were only too well founded. Her sister was stricken with a fatal illness.

Mrs. Yorke died on Sunday, 21st November, 1926, and was buried beside her parents at Willesden. Mr. Augustine Birrell sends Lady Battersea an understanding letter of condolence :

" 70 Elm Park Road, Chelsea, S.W.

" December 3rd, 1926.

" My thoughts have been pretty constantly with you during the last few weeks, and I have felt that after my own fashion I have been able to sympathise with you in some at least of the aspects of your sorrow. Left as I

now am by the death of my sister, who had accompanied me all through life from the Nursery upwards (or downwards), I find myself the sole survivor of my generation, cut off from a thousand things nobody now knows (or cares) anything about. But as it is the course of Nature, and had run its course without any shadow of disturbance or even momentary estrangement, I suppose we ought to be thankful that we were both allowed to extract so much happiness from a human tie. But it alters life, and leaves us free to quit it without much grumbling."

While Lord Rosebery writes to her :

" Dalmeny House, Edinburgh.

" July 28th, 1927.

" DEAREST CONNIE,

" This is only a hand held out in the darkness to greet you, because I hate being out of touch with you, and I have not heard of you for an age.

" . . . And how are you, my dear ? I picture you looking through the boundless manuscripts collected by poor Annie, which is enough to choke anybody. . . .

" Ever your affectionate,

" A.R."

Lady Battersea had been untiring in her devotion, and was with her sister nearly daily for the last five or six months. She was left the sole executrix of her very complicated estate, but, with her cousins' kind help, she was able to settle her sister's affairs and to carry out her wishes. She also made one or two endowments in her memory. But the strain, at eighty-three years of age, was too great for her. Added to this was the sense of her extreme loneliness. The affection between the sisters had been most touching, and Lady Battersea felt the want of her almost daily correspondence with her sister and the sadness of being the last of her immediate family. From this year, 1926, the entries in the long succession of her diaries cease.

In August 1927 she had a serious illness, and after this she led more or less an invalid's life. She still managed her own affairs with the help of her able secretary and devoted servants, and was told all about the local politics. If anyone was ill or in need, she supplied their wants ; and the invalids would be sent dainty dinners and regaled with peaches and flowers from her garden, and books and magazines from her library.

Her sociability and sense of humour never left her ; and, even when confined to her upstairs sitting-room, she would greet her visitors, in accordance with "the tradition of the true old Jewish hospitality, considering a guest as a loan from Heaven, sacred whilst within the doors of his host's dwelling-place." When they left, she would walk to the end of the passage with them to "farewell corner," generally, like her mother, sending them away with flowers from one of her vases.

Even in the last year of her life, one of her boy nephews remarked :

"There is no-one so amusing as Aunt Connie."

She liked to go in her wheeled chair round the village, when her friends, rich and poor, would come to have a chat with her at their doors. Her memory was still remarkable, and nothing gave her more pleasure than to look up lines from the Bible or her much-loved poets. In her sleepless nights she solaced herself by repeating them, and often would put most puzzling or amusing questions in the watches of the night to her Swiss maid, who, even at that unusual hour, gladly responded to them. There were always her books :

"My books, my books ! What should I do without them ?"

but at last her eyesight failed, and, with that, her spirits. She never cared to be read aloud to, and sustained conversation had become an effort, though even to the end there were the old flashes of genial brilliance. Visits from Dr. Lyttelton, Mr. Birrell, the Bishop of Norwich, Lady Hastings and Lady Suffield, and one or two other friends still gave her pleasure. But she had lost her former zest in life, and I fancy that most of her thoughts dwelt with those who had left her. With her inborn humility she did not recognize what pleasure she could still give to others, and her mind was shadowed by the fear of becoming "in the end, a useless, helpless, old female."

But, even in 1928, she had lost none of her grace of thought or of expression, as we find from her letter to Lord Balfour :

" 10 Connaught Place, W.2.

[July 1928.]

" DEAR LORD BALFOUR,

" Will you do me the favour of accepting the accompanying little gift, in honour of the eightieth anniversary of your birthday. Amongst the many tokens of esteem and affection that you will be receiving, I think mine may probably claim the distinction of being unique ; certainly it brings the warmest of good wishes from the donor, who ventures to call herself, as well, an old friend.

" The little case contains one of the ' Mezuzas ', well known to all members of the Jewish faith and generally found above the door posts in their houses ; and knowing the affection and veneration in which you are justly held by those of that race in England and throughout the world, I feel that this little connecting link with its voice from the Old Testament may not be unfavourably received by you, and so I hope you will accept it with all good wishes for happy returns of the day."

Lord Balfour replied :

" 4 Carlton Gardens, Pall Mall, S.W.1.

" MY DEAR LADY BATTERSEA,

" What a lovely present !—Lovely in itself ; lovely in the sentiment which it embodies ; lovely in the affection which it shows. I shall always treasure it.

" We are both old—*very* old as age is estimated by the young. But never in all the long years of our friendship has it diminished in strength, or varied in quality.—Nor will it !

" With affectionate regard,

" Believe me,

" Yours,

" A.J.B."

Little over a year later, Lady Betty Balfour thanks her for her letter of sympathy :

" Fisher's Hill, Woking.

" August 29th, 1929.

" DEAR KIND LADY BATTERSEA,

" I am touched by your letter and very glad to hear from you. Gerald says I am to send you his love and tell you how often he thinks of his happy days with you at Overstrand.

" Our beloved Chief has been here since January.

" He has not been out, or even downstairs, since the day he went to say goodbye to his King on the resignation of the Baldwin administration. . . .

" Throughout his illness he has made *no* complaint, and has asked for nothing. To his nurses . . . he is so considerate and unexacting, they all think him a saint. . . .

" Your very affectionate,

" BETTY BALFOUR."

In the same year Lord Rosebery died, " slipping away from what we call life," as his daughter expressed it, " more peacefully and quietly

than we go to sleep." Mr. Birrell writes to Lady Battersea of him :

" The Pightle, Sheringham, Norfolk.

" May 14th, 1929.

" MY DEAR LADY BATTERSEA,

" I must intrude upon your sorrow for a moment to express my sympathy. I know how much you are feeling it—for even I, without the common ground of relationship and old-world intimacy, am feeling it very deeply. He was up to yesterday far the most *interesting* of my acquaintances, and to talk to him was a real enjoyment.

" The World grows daily a duller place, and I feel as if I should not care two straws were I to hear that *all* the living prominent politicians had suddenly died of their own Verbosity, whereas now, when I think I shall never see Rosebery again, my spirits sink.

" It was a mercy he had not a long, *bed-ridden* illness. Please accept my true sympathy.

" Yours affectionately,

" AUGUSTINE BIRRELL."

During the last two years her chief interest was, perhaps, the New Cromer Hospital, to which she gave several thousand pounds. Her last public appearance was when, among many other donors, she laid the stone for it ; she was gratified by her silver trowel and, feeble as she was, patted down the mortar with her wonted energy, anxiously asking: " Did I do it right ? " She made a tiny speech, and had herself found the quotation from Proverbs: " A merry heart is like good medicine." The people thronged to see her, content even if her voice did not reach them. In fact, the doctor said that, since her enforced retirement, a tradition of reverent affection had grown about her in Norfolk, almost like that which had surrounded Queen Victoria.

Lady Battersea's death occurred on November

22nd, 1931, in her eighty-ninth year, after a month's illness.

Her two younger cousins, Mr. Lionel and Mr. Anthony de Rothschild, came down to Overstrand, and a little service, partly in Hebrew, was held in the house, at which the household, two of her nieces, myself and the Rector of Overstrand attended.

The funeral service took place at Willesden, where her body was taken to be laid to rest beside her parents and sister in the Jewish cemetery.

For the last time her drawing-room was crowded with relations and friends, when in the afternoon a memorial service was held there, Mr. Claude Montefiore giving a short address.

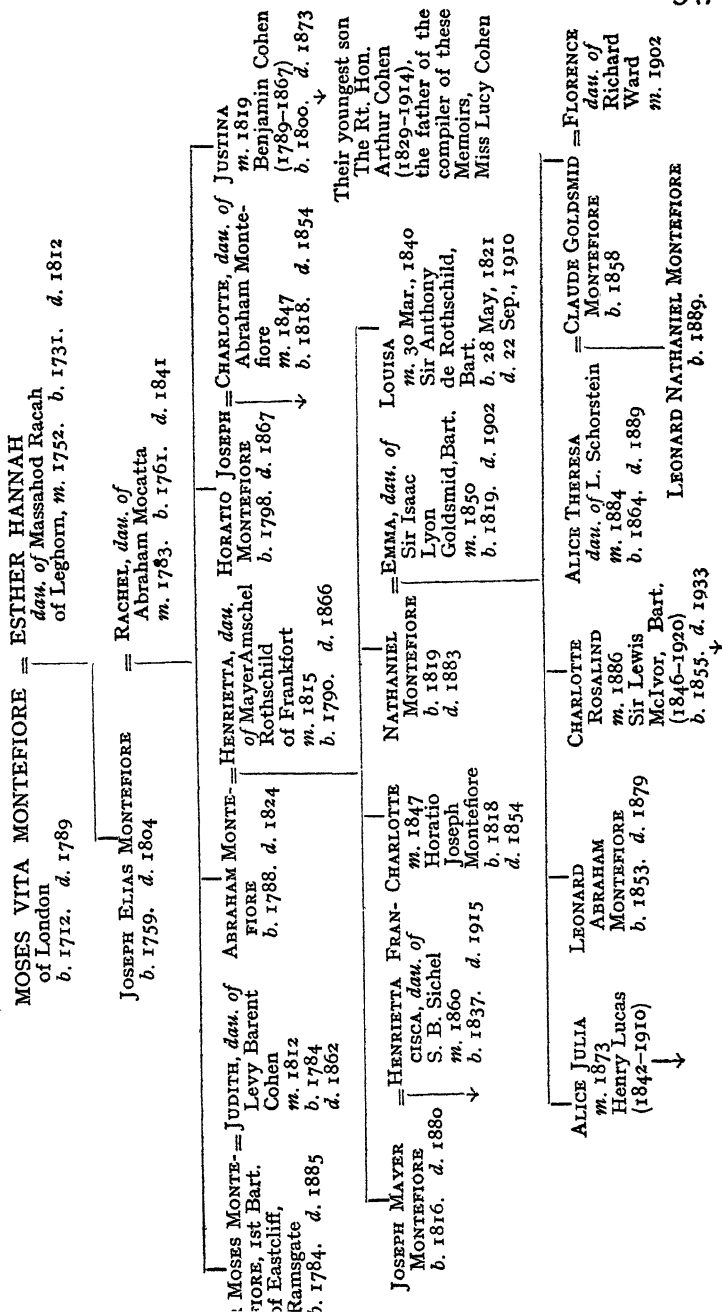
With the family's grateful consent, a memorial service was also held in the Overstrand church, towards the building and beautifying of which she had given so much help. Canon Lyttelton gave a moving address at this service, which was attended by people from all over Norfolk.

And so at her death there was manifested that understanding and sympathy between Christianity and Judaism which Constance Battersea had practised and longed for all her life.

She had herself chosen the texts to be inscribed on her grave. To them her friends wished to add :

"With warm humanity and largeness of heart she radiated sympathy and happiness."

And this will, I think, be the abiding memory which she leaves behind her.



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